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WORLD REFUGEE SURVEY

1992

U.S. COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES

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THE USCR MANDATE

- *to defend the basic human rights of refugees, most fundamentally, the principle of* non-refoulement, *no forced return of a person with a well-founded fear of persecution to his or her homeland;*
- *to defend the rights of asylum seekers to a fair and impartial determination of their status for refugee protection;*
- *to defend the right to decent and humane treatment for all displaced persons, the uprooted victims of human conflict.*

For thirty-four years, this has been the task of the U.S. Committee for Refugees — the protection of refugees, asylum seekers, and displaced persons.

The USCR Mandate is pursued through a rigorous process of documentation and objective reporting of the conditions of refugees, asylum seekers, and displaced persons worldwide regardless of ideology, nationality, race, religion, or social grouping.

Protecting refugees means on-site documentation. In 1991, USCR gathered unique, firsthand information about refugees, asylum seekers, and displaced persons in Austria, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Guinea, Hungary, India, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Kenya, Laos, Liberia, Peru, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Sudan, Thailand, USSR (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia), and Yugoslavia.

Protecting refugees means presenting their cases to the governments involved. This year, USCR intervened directly, not only with the governments listed above, but with a host of other governments about protection of refugees, asylum seekers, and displaced persons. USCR appeared before congressional hearings, briefed government officials and international organizations, spoke with civic and community groups, and the media. USCR published reports on critical refugee situations and on policy matters, as well as its monthly publication, *Refugee Reports*. USCR articles and op-ed pieces appeared in major newspapers worldwide, and were cited in dozens more. USCR staff appeared on Nightline, the Today Show, MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour, 60 Minutes, C-Span, and CNN, as well as other U.S. and international television and radio networks, including National Public Radio and Voice of America.

We do all of this based on a belief that lies at the center of our work: once the consciences of men and women are aroused, great deeds can be accomplished. And, while some of the refugees of concern to us fled their homes long ago, the same beliefs apply to those who left only last week, or just this morning.

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COVER PHOTO: Dismayed, a Croatian woman in Kukunjeva, eastern Croatia, sits amid the rubble near her home, which was destroyed in fierce fighting between ethnic Serbs and Croatian national guardsmen. Credit: J. Tabaca/SIPA PRESS

The Year in Review

Roger P. Winter

The year 1991 was one of mega-change: the concept of "transition" does not do it justice. It produced a total transformation in the world's framework for addressing political, human rights, and humanitarian matters. Many old relationships became invalid, but we remained unsure of the new. Generally the direction was positive, but the re-emergence of violent European and Central Asian tribalism must give the entire world pause.

Consider this very selective and obviously incomplete list of developments in 1991 that bear directly on refugees and displaced people:

- The Soviet Union is GONE, yet we have no confidence that what follows will bring less conflict in the world. The prospects, in fact, seem to be for higher numbers of refugees and displaced people.
- The year saw the birth of a plethora of newly sovereign states—fifteen out of the ashes of the USSR; Croatia and Slovenia; probably Eritrea; possibly Somaliland, as well as a reunited Germany and Yemen.
- The Gulf War spiked upwards the number of refugees in the world and laid new parameters on discussions of the meaning of national sovereignty.
- Yugoslavia committed suicide, and killed a lot of people in the process, while Europe struggled to confront its own indecision as to its role in intervening.
- A face-to-face peace process at least began in the Middle East.
- South Africa reentered the world community, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees moved in, and refugees began to return.
- The Horn of Africa saw the collapse of two entrenched dictatorships. In Ethiopia, the change produced some hope; in Somalia, the world's least understandable civil war degenerated into total anarchy in the capital, Mogadishu.

A Muslim resident of Vinkovci, in eastern Croatia, leads his grandson from their home, which was destroyed by shellfire. AFP/P. Jenks

- A UN-sponsored peace agreement was negotiated in Cambodia, ending more than a decade of civil war. The peace plan holds out both the promise of safe repatriation for 370,000 Cambodian refugees in Thailand and the threat of a return to power by the universally despised Khmer Rouge.
- The entire world recognized the courage and moral authority of Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, while at home in Burma, moral midgets with guns continued to hold democracy captive.

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- A peace accord for El Salvador became UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar's parting gift to the world and to Butros Butros-Ghali, his successor.
- The world's only superpower stained its soul in its maltreatment of Haitian boat people, perhaps the Western Hemisphere's most brutalized population.
- "America First" became the rallying cry behind which admirable and proper concern for the desperately needy in U.S. society was deformed into scapegoating of any and all available targets, tinged with racism and destructive isolationism.

This list could go on. But no development, of course, matches in impact the demise of the Soviet Union. It holds massive implications, for regional conflicts in the developing world and elsewhere, world peace, the functioning of the United Nations, nuclear proliferation, resource utilization, democratization, and other overarching aspects of world society. How far the mighty have fallen! A superpower society of enormous infrastructure—monuments, buildings, subways, power plants, and military strength, blessed with a well-educated, unusually cultured population—now is incapable of feeding its people, keeping them warm, giving them a survivable present, a coherent future. And still the end of the plunge is not yet in sight.

The peripheral republics generally see little difference between Soviet imperialism and Russian imperialism. Russian President Boris Yeltsin framed their fear when he suggested that Russia might seek to reshape its borders to embrace ethnic Russian populations residing as minorities in other republics. Columnist William Safire has written that in moving "away from empire there is concern about healthy nationalism's flip side of ethnic repression and local war...." Journalist Michael Dobbs suggests, "The nightmare scenario is Yugoslavia writ large, a bloody civil war accompanied by the mutation of communism into nationalism." And there are already wars a-plenty—including those in and around Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan, South Ossetia in Georgia, and Georgia's own civil war. All of these conflicts have produced refugees and displaced people. Ethnic Russians, often the agents of past imperialism, are also moving in significant numbers with the potential for much more. And they are not alone.

The Soviet Union's historic ethnic policy has produced a most bizarre map laden with "autonomous" structures embedded within many republics. As each republic declared its independence from the old union, each autonomous area declared its independence from the republic. The potential for conflict is astounding. As Dobbs points out, "From President Mikhail Gorbachev down, virtually every Soviet citizen is descended from more than one nation, making a civilized divorce practically impossible."

The myth that victims elsewhere in the world are somehow in competition with victims at home is taking root more broadly when the truth is that both sets of victims get the crumbs of available resources.

Azerbaijan is resettling thousands of Meskhetian Turks, like this child. USCR/R. Winter

For now, most nationality groups are scrambling for position in a bleak economy and confused political framework. But said Rashab Safin, a Tatar leader in Russia, "The big empire that was called the Soviet Union has already collapsed. Now it is the turn of the small empire (Russia). What is happening is historically inevitable. Not a single empire survives forever. They all collapse—and this one will as well."

Nevertheless, many throughout Russia and the other republics struggled valiantly towards democracy and peaceful resolution of conflict. And, too, many outside the republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) recognized the need to respond to the deteriorating humanitarian situation there, though predictably the initial focus in Europe was on the need for a new Iron Curtain to keep out all potential migrants from the east. Outside governments also too slowly began to realize the need to use their new diplomatic relations with each emerging republic to minimize compelled migration by avoiding actions such as the dismissing of Russians from their jobs or the consideration of parliamentary resolutions threatening to disenfranchise thousands of Russians or others (e.g. in Latvia and Lithuania).

Outside of the CIS, despite the list of critical developments cited above, the major issues that relate to refugees and displaced people were similar to those of 1990. Weapons were still being mass produced and massively and irresponsibly distributed, such as China's substantial sales to Sudan with Iranian financing. Globally, particularly in Africa, democratization did make progress, a trend that contributes to hope for the future, for, as James H. Billingham noted, "... out of the large and generally depressing literature on how wars actually start in the modern world, there is one encouraging fact: democracies in history do not fight one another." And the United Nations, despite its structural limitations, is increasingly showing that it can more nearly approximate what our world needs it to be.

So how did 1991 unfold in terms of the five point agenda set forth in this column last year and, now, proposed here again as an equally valid agenda for 1992?

1. Advance and institutionalize international protection and assistance for internally displaced people.

This is surely one agenda item on which a great deal materialized in 1991.

Morten Hvaal

This year, we lost a brave colleague and a good friend. Egil Hagen represented Norwegian People's Aid in south Sudan. Responsible for getting food and medicine into the chaos of Sudan's war zone, he saved thousands of civilian lives—often with little more than his wit, his energy, and his daring. He was, like others we have met who serve refugees, a hero. We will miss him, and dedicate this **World Refugee Survey** ***to his memory.***

The allied intervention into Iraq to benefit at-risk Kurds and Shi'ites was not necessarily precedential because of the unique conditions under which it occurred, but it certainly did charge the debate. The UN struggled mightily with the need to confront more directly its responsibilities for internally displaced people and in fact made progress with the creation of the Office of the Emergency Relief Coordinator, a high level "Supremo" with important new tools for improving the UN's ability to respond to a wide range of humanitarian emergencies. Still, the system clings to the concept of at least "minimal acquiescence" by a government before the UN will respond. It never really confronted the heart of the problem: to recognize that there is evil in the world and that, in isolated cases when a rogue government debauches its own people, the lines for international action on behalf of the people must both exist and be clear. It therefore did not resolve this most serious problem. Nevertheless, the days of Pol Pots hiding their horrors behind a deformed concept of "national sovereignty" must end. As Professor Aristide Zolberg said, "States may assert that sovereignty is absolute, but we don't have to believe them."

Increasingly, people worldwide understand that a codified international system for approaching this type of situation, embracing both universal and regional mechanisms, is the best method for resolving the humanitarian problem while avoiding neocolonialistic abuse. Former UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar noted, "We are clearly witnessing what is probably an irresistible shift in public attitudes toward the belief that the defense of the oppressed in the name of morality should prevail over frontiers and legal documents." The international community must make the choice Boris Yeltsin claims his government has made: "We have made an irrevocable choice in which the human being is the supreme value and his interests constitute the basis of the foreign and domestic policies of the state. . . ." The international community needs to make that same commitment and proceed to put the practical mechanisms in place to achieve that end, regardless of the encroachment on "sovereign" governments.

2. Strengthen the multilateral humanitarian institutions.

Despite the theatrics regarding the "Supremo," there was no improvement in 1991 in terms of underlying commitment to increasing the diplomatic, operational, and financial strength of the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross, and other operational international entities that deal with refugees and displaced people. While huge sums of money were brought to bear on people displaced in connection with the Persian Gulf War, we continued to regress on basic care and maintenance for the rest of the refugees and displaced people worldwide. Despite the magnitude of potential displacement in the former Soviet Union, UNHCR was struggling to open a one-person office in Moscow as 1991 closed. It is in a resource and personnel ceiling straightjacket, caused consciously by donor governments. UNHCR's performance in Ethiopia/Eritrea again justifiably came in for muted criticism. Yet, hypocritically, major donors criticized its performance in the aftermath of the Gulf War while not accepting that they themselves were the greatest determinants of that performance.

In fact, the world community ought not to scapegoat UNHCR but rather commit to making it better, just as it must with the entire UN system. Yet as the year closed, member states were one billion dollars in arrears in payments to the UN (only 68 of 159 members had paid in full), and the balance due was "the highest level of unpaid member debt in history." The United States was the largest single debtor.

3. Promote successful repatriation and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced people.

It has often been said of late that 1992 will be a year of repatriation. My great fear, however, is that it will be a year of lost opportunity regarding repatriation. My colleague Anna Cecelia Escalante recently pointed out that "peace must be based on more than the mere laying down of arms." So too repatriation, to be maximally successful, must be more than physical movement back across a border or to a home area.

The opportunity is the chance to convert repatriation into reconciliation through wise planning and realistic investment of resources. The opportunities for repatriation—Angola, South Africa, Cambodia, Somalia, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Western Sahara, hopefully one day soon Afghanistan, Liberia, Mozambique—are many, and almost all will involve return to totally devastated home areas. Journalist Paul Lewis points out that UNHCR "as a rule of thumb reckons it costs twice as much to send refugees home and get them restarted as it does to keep them in a camp for a year." But repatriation is a solution, and a camp is not. The hope of investments in repatriation-related development and transitional aid is to capture the momentum of peace for the benefit of all, the diminution of future conflict and refugee flows, the enhancement of democratization.

Unfortunately, looking at what donor governments have been willing to invest in repatriation opportunities in 1991, there is no reason beyond their rhetoric to believe those governments value the opportunities available.

4. Ensure that victims of human conflict in the poorest, least strategically important countries of the world don't continue to be ignored.

We in the NGO and religious communities have essentially failed at this. There is increasing evidence that refugees, internally displaced people, and victims of violence in places like Somalia have lost whatever priority the Cold War competition for their hearts and minds might previously have afforded them. Developed societies, in some cases afflicted with serious recession, seem driven towards less engagement with these matters rather than more. The myth that victims elsewhere in the world are somehow in competition with victims at home is taking root more broadly when the truth is that both sets of victims get the crumbs of available resources.

This Vietnamese woman, denied refugee status in Hong Kong, is one of 59 asylum seekers forced to return home following an agreement reached in October 1991 by Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, and Vietnam. AFP

NGOs and religious bodies have a massive job to do in helping the societies of the developed world humanize their priorities.

5. Fight off the attempts by the rich liberal democracies of the West to cut themselves off from asylum seekers from the second and third worlds.

If we all have learned anything from the environmental movement, it is that the world is ultimately interconnected. It is not possible to draw away from the rest of the world and somehow wall "them" out. It is certainly not possible while maintaining civilized democratic institutions, nor does it make sense economically to wall out newcomers while, as Sir Anthony Parsons has said, preserving "a mammoth old peoples' home" in a fortress Europe, for example. Interdiction policies, such as that of the United States in Mexico or off the coast of Florida, ultimately do not work either because they do not resolve the causes of the movement they seek to deter.

* * *

On balance, while the prospects for the world, especially the developed world, have improved in the past year because of the implications of the Cold War's passing, the prospects for refugees and displaced people specifically have not. It is unacceptable that all that struggle, all those resources, including billions of dollars to sustain conflict, and all those lives should have been consumed by geostrategic confrontation, yet when the time for healing arrives, the energy is spent, the cupboard is bare.

This is not the time for the United States or others in the developed world to withdraw from humanitarian commitments to the rest of the world, pursuing isolationism, which Congressman Stephen Solarz rightly calls "a long discredited delusion arisen from the graveyard of bad ideas." This is a time to lead with the very best of our principles—humanism, democratization, sustainable development to benefit all, at home and abroad. The quality of our future and that of our children depend on understanding this.

Ethnicity and Refugees

Howard Adelman

No enduring world order can be created which ignores the ubiquitous yearnings of nations in search of roots in an ethnic past, and no study of nations and nationalism that completely ignores that past can bear fruit.[1]

The New World Disorder

Once upon a time, not very long ago—in fact, a very short time ago—ideological conflicts between Western liberal democracy and authoritarian communism were acted out within the domestic politics of many less developed states. The two sides in a domestic conflict were supplied with arms by the superpowers of the two rival ideological blocs. Often, however, neither side in these domestic disputes identified itself with either ideology. Either bloc might have supported a military dictatorship with some depth of populist support. In fact, regimes supported by the United States were often an amalgam of traditional elites (feudal, military, financial) rather than liberal democratic constituencies. The regimes supported by the Soviet Union and China were more likely to identify themselves as communist or socialist.

In Vietnam, the result of this conflict in ideologies fought through surrogates was the largest resettlement program for refugees of the last quarter century. Five million Afghan refugees waited in Pakistan and Iran for the war to end, while proxies of the superpowers fought a purportedly ideological battle. The world considered most Ethiopian refugees to be products of ideological conflict, despite the nationalist origins of the war in Eritrea and other areas, because Haile Meriam Mengistu, the military dictator who usurped power in a coup, was an avowed Marxist.

Following World War II, the widely held belief that ideological conflict was the root cause of refugee flight was the major premise for the world community's three solutions for their plight. Repatriation, local settlement in an adjacent country, or resettlement in a third country—in that order—were considered the only three forms of permanent solutions for refugees. For example, after the Cold War began, it was widely believed that Greek refugees could return to Greece once the communist insurgency was defeated and the new Western-oriented political system took hold. Similarly, in Afghanistan, it was expected that the refugees would repatriate after the fall of the communist government in Kabul—assuming it does fall.

The Western democracies led political and economic efforts to put this new set of solutions in place. It was the Cold War's humanistic side. The Western democracies underwrote the cost of maintaining refugee populations in states adjacent to the conflict until they could safely repatriate when the communist regime was defeated. Resettlement in a third country was only an option when victory over the communists in a reasonable time seemed doubtful—for example, the massive resettlement of refugees from Cuba and Vietnam in Western countries, primarily the United States.

These three post-World War II solutions to refugee situations were very different from the three international responses most widely accepted before World War II, when ethnic conflict was considered the primary cause of refugee flows, rather than economic or political ideology. During that period, three other permanent solutions were utilized: redrawing borders, exchanging populations, and securing international guarantees for minority rights. The borders of many of the countries of Eastern Europe were set after World War I. One very small example among myriad was the plebiscite in Eupen-Malmedy to decide whether that small area on the western border of Germany should go to Belgium or Germany. The large exchange of Greek and Turkish populations after World War I is perhaps the best known of these programs, but there were many other population transfers, including the idea of transferring the Arab populations of Palestine to facilitate setting up a Jewish homeland. Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, only partially included in the Treaty of Versailles, provided for the protection of minority rights. These solutions stand in marked contrast to the solutions mandated to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): repatriation, local settlement, and resettlement in a third country. They differ because the latter Cold War solutions are premised on the sanctity of national borders and on the integrity of sovereign states, a rationale arguably reflecting Western desires to resist the expansion of communist ideology.

In the last two years, we have witnessed the demise of an ideological system that has dominated the Soviet people for seventy years, and much of Eastern Europe and Asia for forty years. Perhaps even more remarkable has been the resurgence of faith in liberalism and even capitalism among those throwing off the yoke of oppression. But at the same time, we have also seen ethnic conflict reemerge as the primary cause of population displacement. Certainly, in Eastern Europe, borders are under question as the Soviet empire collapses from the weight of its own economic mismanagement and suppression of freedom.

And this is only the beginning. The implosion of India, of Indonesia, of Nigeria—the largest country in Africa—has yet to occur, though each has had or is experiencing degrees of rebellion against central state authority. The rebellions of ethnic groups such as the Sikhs or of the Ibos in these countries were not akin to the secessionist southern states of the United States, forced to reunite to forge the common American nation. For India, Indonesia, and Nigeria are not nations forged by states. Rather, each consists of nations that

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A Kurdish refugee family in the mountains of Iran. "Today, Saddam Hussein again makes a pretense of recognizing Kurdish autonomy, which he will again undoubtedly undermine when he regains the power to do so." Middle East Watch/S. Marks

existed prior to the construction of the state.

When we consider the possibility of nationalist forces erupting all over the world in a way that will make the present period appear relatively tranquil, two key questions arise. Will the world abandon the Cold War refugee solutions for those in place before World War II? More seriously for refugees, will Western, particularly U.S. support for any systematic resolution of the refugee condition wane with the demise of the Cold War?

Certainly, in Europe, North America, and Australia, there has been growing resistance to the large number of spontaneous arrivals claiming refugee status. The numbers are not the only problem. The high cost of processing individual claims for refugee status through a quasi-judicial system weighs upon the overburdened economies of these states. The relatively small numbers that are actually deported after this whole cumbersome process is finished is another factor. The fact is that the refugee claims system is increasingly perceived as a back door for immigration used by those fleeing economically depressed and strife-torn regions. Western states believe they are losing control over their borders and their own rights to self-determination, including the right to determine who can and who cannot become members of their polity. The legal system so painfully constructed after World War II was created to protect refugees fearing persecution from a tyrannical state apparatus. With the demise of any ideological motive, will the humanitarian motive be insufficient to preserve refugee protection when the causes of refugee flows increasingly result from messy conflicts between rival nationalities and potentially much larger mass movements of refugees?

Nationalism and Ideology

To get some handle on this shift or reversal in the prime cause of refugee flows—from ideology, or military coups in the guise of ideology, to conflicts between nationalist groups—an outline sketch of ethnicity or nationalism as a source of conflict and refugee flows might be helpful.[2]

Unlike the two competing universalist ideologies—communism, which claimed to be a scientific and collective solution, and liberal capitalism, based on the primacy of the individual—nationalism is depicted as a belief which glorifies "the peculiar and the parochial, national differences and national individualities,"[3] and which has as its goal the "national self-determination, and the lasting fulfillment which comes to man when he lives as a member of a sovereign nation."[4]

Some have further argued that nationality demands exclusivity and homogeneity, a vision attributed (erroneously, I believe) to the heritage of the Hebrews. Christianity inherited the universalistic strain of Messianism, according to this interpretation, by building on the spiritual and cultural heritage, while nationalism was erected on a primitive racial and materialistic conception to develop a nationalistic Messianism considered as "the will to live dominantly and triumphantly as a rehabilitated people in a national home."[5]

The people. The home. In fact, nationalism itself has not been the problem. The problem has always been determining who belongs to a nation and the territory which belongs to that people. Whether nationalism is defined as a desire to belong to the same legal and political system (a *Staatsnation*), or is defined in terms of language, culture, and religion (*Kulturnation*),[6] there remains the question of where to draw territorial borders. Should the Catholics of Northern Ireland be allowed to secede and join the Irish Republic?

The demise of communism has resurrected the nationalist question in Eastern Europe as a primary issue. Of course, it was always a central issue that Marxists could not resolve. Rosa Luxemburg, the founder of the Social Democratic Party of Poland, denied there was a right to national self-determination, and opposed nationalism in principle as leading to fragmentation. Lenin, in contrast, emphasized the right of self-determination, but also recognized the tendency to fragmentation. As a result, the Soviet Union gave self-determination *de jure* recognition, but ultimately denied the principle any realization in practice. Initially, the Soviet revolutionaries under the Leninist doctrine recognized the independence of the Baltic republics. Stalin, who all along had opposed Lenin's recognition of the right to national self-determination,[7] reabsorbed them into the Russian Empire at the first opportunity.

Fifth columnists were used to take over independent revolutionary governments in republics such as Azerbaijan and Armenia, which then "voluntarily" joined or became subordinate to the power of the Soviet federation. This failed only where and as long as Western military intervention (an expeditionary German force in Finland, for example) or the defeat of the Red Army allowed independent nation-states to sustain themselves. Communists could not tolerate secession and the realization of national self-determination. A case in point is Yugoslavia, where Marshal Tito, more tolerant of nationalist self-determination than any other communist ruler, also clamped down on the Croatian secessionists in Yugoslavia in 1972. Today, with the demise of communism, nationalism has risen in Yugoslavia, and communists who retain power in Serbia have been unwilling to accept the secession of Croatia, particularly since large numbers of Serbs live there.

The issue of national self-determination also permeates non-European conflicts around the world with migratory implications. Eritrea, a former Italian colony, was forcefully made a federated state of Ethiopia by the United Nations after World War II, with the right of self-determination after ten years. However, not only was that right denied, but even Eritrea's limited autonomy was taken away. The twenty-two million Kurds, promised an independent state after World War I, were in fact divided up among Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria. Today, Saddam Hussein of Iraq again makes a pretense of recognizing Kurdish autonomy, which he will again undoubtedly undermine when he regains the power to do so. China refuses the right of Tibet to self-determination, as does any government that believes that power comes out of the barrel of a gun rather than from the consent of a free people.

What attitude does today's victorious universalist belief, democratic liberalism, have towards nationalism? A more pragmatic one. In the short term, stability was primary for the development of capitalism. In the name of international peace and order, after World War I, national self-determination, the division of each separate nationality into a sovereign state, was to be the guide in the subsequent peace agreement. The Czechs, the Slavs, the Romanians, the Kurds, the Arabs still ruled by Turkey—all were promised their own states. The major principle running through Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points was the right of all peoples to live in liberty and safety. Frontiers were to be redrawn along "clearly recognizable lines of nationality." Why?

This new emergence of nationality . . . need not entail forced transfer of population in a silly, fruitless, and destructive effort to create homogeneous nations within a state.

The answer goes back to the nineteenth century and John Stuart Mill's Whig theory of nationalism. Nationalism was not valued in itself, but was simply considered useful because the commonality of a people tended to give representative government a better chance of working. Government by and for the people was the primary principle, not nationalism. According to Mill,

> *A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a Nationality if they are united among themselves by common sympathies which do not exist between them and any others—which make them co-operate with each other more willingly than with other people, desire to be under the same government, and desire that it should be government by themselves or any portion of themselves exclusively.*[8]

It was a vision of *Staatsnation* united by inner identification and sentiment and fused together by a collective act of will to create a common legal system.

That meant, however, where national self-determination might lead to disorder and conflict, or where liberty was not an immediate prospect, self-determination—the first principle of the League of Nations—was sacrificed to the need for international order. The mandate system was established after World War I by the Treaty of Versailles to administer the former colonies of the German and Ottoman Empires to implement Article 22 of the League of Nations Covenant providing for the provisional recognition of *independent* (my italics) nations, with the Mandatory authority only required to render administrative advice and assistance. It ended up not as a vehicle for the orderly development of self-government of a people, but as a mode of perpetuating imperial control through zones of influence, allowing national conflicts, as in the case of Palestine, to fester. The recognition of national self-determination was subordinated to the interests of the imperial powers almost as much in the West as in the new communist empires of the East.

Lord Acton, the author of the famous statement, "Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely," held that nationalism was not only an illegitimate but a dangerous and irrational force. "Making the nation the mold and measure of the State" had to be subordinated to what was in effect a superior military power. For Acton, a state monopoly on military power to keep various nationalities in check was preferable to systems built on purely nationalist lines. Thus, the nationalist rivalries within India and Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) were suppressed. Today, the world is the inheritor of those suppressed conflicts, and refugees are the product of the angry and intolerant form in which they have reemerged.

Nationalism—Scourge or Creative Force

Others have defended nationalism, not simply as a useful tool of liberalism (John Stuart Mill) or of communism (Lenin), but as a good in its own right—nationalism, not as mother of all wars, but as "the mother of all creations on earth." For nationalism has been identified with a life force, "innate, organic, and genetic," the basis of natural power and the inner genius of being.[9] "A nation is as natural a plant as a family, only with more branches," said J. G. Herder. "Nothing, therefore, is more manifestly contrary to the purpose of political government than the unnatural enlargement of states, the wild mixing of various races and nationalities under one sceptre."[10]

War for conquest, according to Herder, is not the result of nationalism, but its antithesis. A nation is an extended family, endowed by its members with sympathy and fellow feeling, the basis of molding humans together into nations willing to defend each other from conquest by others, but also the basis of caring for all of humanity.

However, some, such as J. G. Fichte, derived from this idea a rationale for dreaming of a homogeneous nation where the national will would not be contaminated. The individual was to identify totally with the nation, and the state would regulate all aspects of the individual's life. This process of identification entailed purifying the nation, expelling minorities, and uniting all those of the same language and nationality under the same political roof, hence, requiring the elimination of "internal" borders and further purges of minorities that were weakening the national fabric. Individual rights and individuals apart from the state were phantoms.

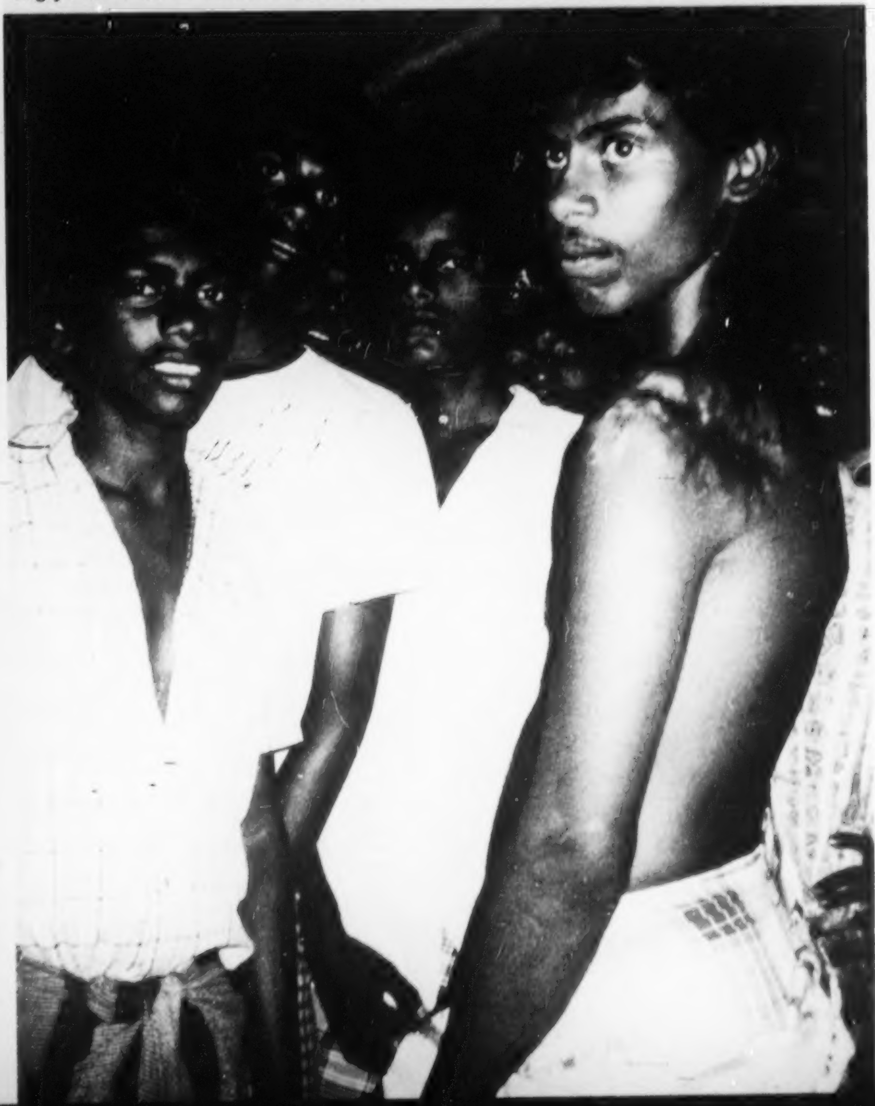
Other thinkers, such as G. W. F. Hegel, moved in the opposite direction. Nationalism had to be subsumed under the rule of law and a state structure, not because nationalism per se was inherently dangerous, but because its fullest expression of freedom would be unrealized if it merely reflected tradition and custom, or even self-conscious cultural expressions and activities. A *Kulturnation* had to become a *Staatsnation*. Individual rights had to be codified in laws and principles that explicitly recognized and protected freedom as fundamental. And those laws and principles had to be made universal and international. This, in fact, has been the case with the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and other agreements that have evolved for the protection of refugees. Nationalism that manifests itself in the rule of law leads to a state that defends rather than suppresses differences, that protects individual and minority rights rather than oppressing individuals and rejecting minorities from living in or participating in the state.

This interpretation holds nationalism not as something given and primordial that exists outside the trajectory of history, but as a product of history. Nations have disappeared. Nations have been reborn. Nations have combined. At those magical turning points that occur in history and through which we are once again living, those elements so constitutive of a *Kulturnation*—rooted in ethnic consciousness, common language, memory, and symbols—reassert themselves for a place in the sun and for an opportunity to find a political and legal form that will protect the continuity of those people.

There is, however, in this view, another reason for nations to be constituted in a state. Nations have to have their own states so they can properly live under the rule of law and have the full benefit of freedoms guaranteed to all. Nationalism, in this sense, is not merely a convenient tool of Whig ideology to unite people so they can elect governments that protect the right of every individual to pursue his or her own selfish interests. Freedom is not just the right to pursue self-interest. Freedom is a matter of universal right, and one that has to be guaranteed to all by the rule of law, a rule of law that, though administered through states, must become universal.

But nationalism—the basis for building states, the rule of law, and the protection of freedom in its fullest sense, and not merely the right to pursue one's own self interest—can also be used for xenophobic and destructive purposes, for expressing subjective feeling at the expense of another nation. To ensure against this, all nations have needed states to make the rule of law and the protection of rights and freedoms primary. The break up of imperial states, the desire for nations to realize the expression of their unique identities through a sovereign state, is not the road to ruin but the path to a new international order built on the rule of law and

Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka. "The nationalist rivalries within India and Sri Lanka were suppressed. Today, the world is the inheritor of those conflicts, and refugees are the product of the angry and intolerant form in which they have reemerged." USCR/C. Robinson



A six-year-old refugee boy sits amidst the debris of a hotel room after a night of shelling by Serbian troops in Dubrovnik, Croatia. AP

the protection of the freedom of individuals, the equality of groups, and the full realization of each unique nation.

Nationalism and Freedom

An ethnic group is not a nation. For a nation requires a territory in which it is dominant, a state that protects and develops the unique qualities of that nation but also protects the equal rights of all its citizens under the rule of law. However, if the state is also dedicated to protecting and enhancing the ethos of its dominant nationality, as Giuseppe Mazzini, the father of Italian nationalism, postulated in his essay, "The Duties of Man," the responsibility for preserving and enhancing the national character means that all citizens have to be inculcated with a common national tradition. This poses problems—both for the right of individuals to deviate and to challenge the thinking and the symbols of that nation, as well as for the rights of ethnic minorities to preserve their own national traditions within the envelope of a legal state where they are citizens.

Is it an expression of freedom to burn the flag of the United States when challenging the militaristic side of the American national tradition? Is it an expression of cultural and religious freedom for a Sikh to enroll in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and insist on wearing a turban, challenging the traditional image of the uniform of that force? Is it an expression of freedom to insult the head of state whether she be a monarch who inherited her throne, an appointed ex-politician, or an elected official?

These are the simple issues. What happens when two nationalities have claims to the same territory—Palestine, the Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh inside Azerbaijan? What happens when several nationalities share the same territory and state, and one of them is not dominant, as in Uganda? What is the national ethos? The fact is that the national question appears easier to solve when a "new nation" is being founded under a secular constitutional faith, as in the United States, so that the national sensibilities of various minorities and indigenous nations can presumably be ignored in the energy and determination to forge a new nation. Individuals may get protection, but not ethnic minorities. But if an indigenous nation becomes dominant in a state, as the English did in the British Isles, what happens to the Celtic nations—the Scots, the Irish, the Welsh, the Cornwallians? What happened in France to the Bretons and Basques? What happened in Spain to the Basques and Catalans? What happened to the non-Magyar minorities as the Magyars attempted to assimilate forcibly the various minorities in what would become Hungary? Minority rights, particularly political, language, and cultural rights, tend to be swamped by the ambitions and energies of the newly flourishing nation. And if a nation is divided among a number of separate states, such as was the case with the Germans and Arabs, a pan-nationalist nationalism tends to be the most intolerant of all other national minorities, frequently blaming them for sapping the strength of unity from the national ethos.

But when there are a number of nations competing for primacy in a new state, as in many states in Africa, the national competition often becomes both a vehicle and an excuse for the primary authority of the state to shift from the rule of law to the rule of force, since the state has presumably been given the monopoly on the use of coercive force. Whether a state is used to forge and unite a nation, as in the nations of the new world or the ex-colonial states, or when a nation seeks to preserve itself in a state, as in indigenous and pan-nationalist movements, minorities and individual rights always seem to be at risk. The risk is much greater when attempts are made to forge a nation within the boundary of a former colonial state or when attempts are being made to unite states through the energies of a pan-nationalist movement.

What then do we make of developments in the new Europe, with its attempt to forge a superstate out of many nations? What we have is the raising of the right of free passage of goods, services, and people from the nation-state to the superstate, the realm of European Community as a whole. Further, Europe not only has the duty of creating an economic community, but a common community of rights under the rule of law protected by the court in Strasburg.[11] Once the nation had secured its national identity through sovereign control of the apparatus of state, the instrument of a superstate through the voluntary will of its constituent nations could be used to broaden and entrench both the economic freedoms and human rights of individuals, which is the responsibility of a state apparatus. For though the superstate, and European integration in particular, poses some risk to national identity, its primary function is to ensure the preservation of that national identity lest internecine wars or superpower battles end up destroying Europe altogether.[12] There is also a danger, minor I believe, that Europe will be used to forge a new European nationality, a new nation forged by a state along the lines of the United States but without the language and the culture, and in doing so become xenophobic in relation to Asian "hordes" or Muslims and create that unity based on a mythical Christian European identity.

I believe we are entering a new world order different from those following World War I and World War II. It is one that will recognize the fundamental legitimate rights of nations to have a sovereign state of their own and not sacrifice that right to preservation of a false and temporary stability. This means that borders will no longer be sacrosanct. There will be a danger of greater instability. But if this new emergence of nationality is also accompanied by the insistence on the rule of law and the protection of the rights of individuals and of minorities, it need not entail forced transfer of populations in a silly, fruitless, and destructive effort to create homogeneous nations within a state. What emerges will look like the resurrection of the post-World War I system, but with voluntarism replacing coercion as the basis for change and the rule of law on a superstate level replacing aggression by individual states in the defense of the rights of minority populations coerced into flight.

The new international order for the protection of refugees must blend some of the methods of protecting refugees and the rights of nations developed after World War I with the development of superstate law and the legal protections for rights and refugees developed in the aftermath of World War II. This would mean that borders are redrawn, but it should be done through a legal process. It will mean that populations will move, but this should occur in a more orderly fashion. It will mean that human rights protections will extend to minorities and be subject to international responsibility. But it will also mean that the existing regime of access to protection by other states must be maintained for refugees fleeing persecution. The 1951 Refugee Convention and its Protocol must continue to be expanded both to other states and through the development of state procedures for ensuring that those protections are to have the appropriate administrative and quasi-judicial apparatus to ensure that refugee protection is not a matter of mere principle. Thus, while the existing regime for refugee protection is preserved and expanded, both quantitatively and qualitatively, steps must be taken to rearrange the political order so that the situations that give rise to refugees are eliminated. Otherwise, Europe and North America, when flooded with refugees from these conflicts largely rooted in ethnic disputes, will more and more seek ways to deter refugees from entering, but without putting in place the instruments to counter the forces that give rise to the flows in the first place.

Notes

1. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origin of Nations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, p. 5.
2. Ethnicity is not to be equated with nationalism. Ethnicity is older. However, if one accepts the division between two different roots for ethnicity in the pre-modern era, lateral and extensive aristocratic ethnic constellations which include scribes and the wealthier merchants, and vertical, intensive urban and artisan or tribal based and more exclusive constellations (cf. Smith 1986), then the two forms of ethnicity can be roughly correlated with the two forms of nationalism, state nationalism and cultural nationalism, respectively.
3. Hans Kohn, *Nationalism: Its Meaning and History*, Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1955, p. 15.
4. Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, London: Hutchinson, 1985, p. 90.
5. Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study of its Origins and Background*, New York: Collier, 1944, p. 45.
6. This distinction was made by the German historian and nationalist Friedrich Meinecke in *Cosmopolitanism and the Nation State*. Karl Deutsch, in *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality*, made these two conceptions necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for defining a nation.
7. In 1913, Stalin wrote *Marxism and the National Question*, in which he depicted language, territoriality, economic unity, and culture as four necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for being a nation. As the first Commissar of Nationalities in the Soviet Union of 1917, he was able to use this theoretical thesis to deny the reality of a nation because it lacked one of the necessary conditions and then to attempt to forge a united economic sphere which would ensure that he could continue to reject any ultimate status to a nation.
8. J. S. Mill, *On Representative Government*. Opening of Chapter XVI, "of Nationality, As Connected With Representative Government," London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd. 1910, pp. 359–60. For a contemporary analysis that puts forth an instrumentalist view of nationalism combining the liberal political ideology of Mill and liberal capitalist theory of nationalism as a tool to mobilize labor as the elites attempt to accumulate wealth and power, cf. Daniel Bell, "Ethnicity and Social Change" in Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan (eds.), *Ethnicity, Theory and Experience*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975. For extensive empirical research to support this thesis, see Fredrick Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. Boston: Little Brown, 1969. There are, of course, other accounts that explain nationalism away as mere epiphenomenon in the development of liberalism and capitalism rooted in the development of technology and culture rather than in the economy as espoused in the works of Marshall McLuhan, which correlate nationalism with the development of the printing press and the possibility of mass literacy in the language of the masses. Two variations on this theme are put forth by Benedict Anderson (*Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: New Left Book, 1983) and Earnest Gellner (*Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983).
9. F. M. Barnard, tr. and ed., *J. G. Herder on Social and Political Culture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969, pp. 291–293. For contemporary sociobiological versions of this interpretation, see R. Paul Shaw and Yuwa Wong, *Genetic Seeds of Warfare: Evolution Nationalism and Patriotism*, Boston: Unwin Human, 1989.
10. Ibid, p. 324.
11. Peter Alter's book, *Nationalism* (London: Edward Arnold, 1989), tends to stress the development of a superstate system while supporting nationalism as an indispensable stage in the development of the new world order. But it is only a stage, not an indispensable part of the ultimate order. This is perhaps why he was so mistaken in celebrating Slovene loyalty to the Yugoslav state and suggesting that, "in trying to facilitate the coexistence of several nations and nationalities in a federalist, multinational polity, the pioneering Yugoslav state had made decisive headway in solving an old problem." (p. 134)
12. This is in fact the way most Europeans view the nationalist question in relation to the European community. See Helene Riffault, "Comparative Research on National Identities: The Lessons of Surveys Conducted in the Twelve Countries of the European Community." *Innovation*, Vienna (1991), 4:1, pp. 31–40.

Call Them What They Are—Refugees

Bill Frelick

Refugees ought to be protected. Everyone agrees. Controversy arises, however, in determining who is—or isn't—a refugee and how that decision should be made.

Alarms are ringing among the governments of the established, industrialized democracies with the rise in the numbers of asylum seekers—people asking governments to recognize them as refugees—and growing fear that those numbers could be eclipsed by mass exoduses pouring out of the former Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, or other parts of Central and Eastern Europe undergoing death throes or birth pangs.

Numbers alone undoubtedly cause strains on national systems for adjudicating asylum claims. When the numbers of asylum seekers have been low, asylum approval rates traditionally have been high; as the numbers rise, approval rates fall. Due process for adjudicating asylum claims is time-consuming and costly. Higher numbers give rise to shortcuts—accelerated procedures, blanket determinations, designations of certain refugee-producing countries as "safe." Now, other competing concerns, some economically driven, others political or racial, add to the uneasiness brought about by the larger numbers of asylum seekers. The host governments of Western Europe and North America suggest that asylum claims today are weaker than in the past, less compelling, no longer requiring our special attention and concern.

This essay is an attempt to address that supposition. It will examine the asylum question at its starting point—"Who is a refugee?" and "Who decides?"

The refugee definition generally accepted as the standard upon which Western governments base their asylum decisions is derived from the 1951 *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, which is explicitly and implicitly Western and Eurocentric in orientation. Its framers explicitly limited its legal force to refugees affected by events occurring prior to 1951 in Europe, thus excluding the rest of the world's refugees—from its protection mandate. Although the geographic limit and cut-off date were subsequently dropped in the 1967 Protocol, the implicit Western and Eurocentric state bias remained untouched. The definition of "refugee" incorporated in the Convention and Protocol was limited to persons fearing a narrow spectrum of human rights violations—persecution for reasons of "race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion." Furthermore, the determination of refugee status—whether a person's fear was genuine, or whether the persecution feared indeed stemmed from one of the five enumerated grounds—was left exclusively in the hands of states.

The problem becomes not only definitional—"Who is a refugee?"—but also political—"Who decides?"

The notion of a well-founded fear of persecution based on deprivation of civil and political rights accorded easily with 1951's Western view of Soviet-style communist repression of dissidents and minorities. It accommodated the bona fide need of those people, while at the same time enabling the West to score points in the Cold War's ideological battle by encouraging disaffected elements within the East bloc to "vote with their feet." The five enumerated grounds of the Convention and Protocol definition encompass many of the truly serious grounds for human rights violations, as does its use of the term "persecution" to refer to the horrors—tortures, arbitrary arrests, and the like—that have befallen untold numbers in our lifetimes. It is not the intention of this essay to criticize the definition for what it includes. What it excludes, however, remains a source of concern, as does the prerogative left to states for its interpretation and implementation.

The international human rights regime is based on two Covenants. The first, the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, addresses rights well understood and protected by the Refugee Convention. The second, however, the *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*, which addresses such fundamental rights as the right to food and shelter (Article 11), as well as other elusive rights, such as that of self-determination (Article 1), has not fit the prototype of the Refugee Convention, despite the obvious relevance of such rights to forced migration during the past forty years.

The incompleteness of the Convention mandate has been obvious in the Third World, where it has been superceded in Africa and Latin America by a more inclusive definition that more closely comports with the reality of forced migration in those parts of the world. Both the Organization of African Unity's (OAU) *Convention Regarding the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa* and the *Cartagena Declaration*, adopted by the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1985, include as refugees persons falling within the definition of the Refugee Convention and Protocol, but, in addition, extend protection to persons compelled to flee their country due to foreign aggression (OAU

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Soldiers march, Guatemalan women look on. Melanie S. Freeman © 1991 The Christian Science Publishing Society

and OAS), occupation (OAU), foreign domination (OAU), internal conflicts (OAS), massive violations of human rights (OAS), or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order (OAU and OAS). Africans and Latin Americans recognized in their own experience with refugees the inadequacy of the Convention definition. Within Africa and Latin America, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) acts in accord with the regional instruments and extends its protection mandate to refugees of war and civil strife. Western governments, led by the United States, willingly contribute to UNHCR for assisting OAU- and OAS-defined refugees in the Third World (though these same states are justly criticized for failing to contribute sufficiently to meet their basic needs).

The development of different legal standards for refugees in the industrialized West and in the Third World is most acutely apparent when a Third World refugee seeks asylum in the West. In most Western states, the Refugee Convention definition has been adopted in national legal codes. The narrow "persecution" standard of the Refugee Convention is insufficient ground for granting asylum when the asylum applicant's life or freedom is endangered by one of the broader causes of flight recognized by the OAU and OAS.

In the United States, as elsewhere, case law has explored the parameters of the refugee definition with regard to situations arising out of the context of civil strife. For example, in a case decided in January 1992, *Immigration and Naturalization Service v. Jairo Jonathan Elias Zacarias*, the U.S. Supreme Court decided by a 6–3 margin that an 18-year-old who fled Guatemala after refusing to join masked guerrillas who came to his home bearing machine guns and demanding that he join them, and who have returned twice looking for him since he left, is not a refugee because he does not fear persecution on account of his political opinion. Writing for the majority, Associate Justice Antonin Scalia commented that Zacarias's fear that the guerrillas would "take me or kill me" was not *on account of* his political opinion. "It is quite plausible, indeed likely," wrote Scalia, "that the taking would be engaged in by the guerrillas in order to augment their troops rather than show their displeasure; and the killing he feared might well be a killing in the course of resisting being taken."[1] Both the Supreme Court and the Bush Administration conceded that Zacarias might be kidnapped or killed upon return. "We acknowledge the harsh fact that young men in Guatemala face grave danger," said the government brief, "but that does not convert them into refugees."[2] The intent of the guerrillas, said the government, was to field an army, not to persecute.

> *Even evidence that Guatemalan guerrillas kill people who do not join them . . . would not make respondent eligible for asylum because such retaliation would not be 'on account of' respondent's political opinion—it would be intended to terrorize prospective recruits into joining.*[3]

The parameters of the Supreme Court's decision were set, of course, by the language of the refugee statute. Within the framework of determining whether a person like Zacarias has a "well-founded fear of persecution on account of . . . political opinion," the Court had the choice of interpreting those words liberally or, in the words of the dissent, written by Associate Justice John Paul Stevens, according to a "narrow, grudging construction."[4]

Zacarias is Everyman. This is what makes his case so compelling. He is the typical refugee. No brain surgeon, no politician, but an 18-year-old, barely a man, who saw the killing—and the killers—on both sides of the conflict and, when forced to make a choice, decided to leave. He didn't leave because of an earthquake or a hurricane or to find a better job; he left because armed men came to his door to pull him into a conflict he wanted no part of, and by making that decision—spoken in actions, not in words—he immediately made himself suspect in the eyes of the guerrillas who presented him with that choice. If he is not a refugee, then precious few of the other sixteen million refugees worldwide are either.

Stevens' dissent tells us,

> *Even if the refusal is motivated by nothing more than a simple desire to continue living an ordinary life with one's family, it is the kind of political expression that the asylum provisions of the statute were intended to protect.*[5]

That statute, says Stevens, "speaks simply in terms of political opinion and does not require that the view be well developed or elegantly expressed."[6]

Stevens is right. Refugees are ordinary people. But our government—and others as well—is trying to sell us the notion that the category "refugee" is reserved for heroes, martyrs, and saints. The Bush Administration's brief to the Supreme Court states that "Congress adopted a precise definition of 'refugee' . . . [because] it feared an overwhelming influx of asylum applicants," and goes on to say that Elias Zacarias's situation is "wholly unlike that of the Christians under the Romans, the Jews under the Nazis, or any other people who were made to suffer for their race, nationality, or beliefs." It then quotes approvingly from a lower court opinion that accepting such persons "demeans the true martyr for whom asylum was intended."[7]

Of course, the United States was not able to exercise its humanitarian compassion for Christians persecuted by the Roman Empire, and it blocked the admission of many Jewish refugees from the Nazis through restrictive application of U.S. immigration laws, but such details are relevant only to those concerned with history, not myth.

Myth Versus Reality

The narrowing interpretation of the refugee standard throughout our adjudicatory system has been accompanied by a mythologizing of past refugees. But the historical reality is different: most refugees admitted to the United States have passed through a rather soft standard based on a combination of broad group determination derived from U.S. hostility to the source country, as well as the person's particular ties to the United States.

Prior to the *Refugee Act of 1980*, refugees were rarely admitted individually at all; they were "paroled" in by the Attorney General in response to mass emergencies. The political underpinning of the humanitarian response was obvious: of the 1,027,407 refugees paroled into the United States between the 1956 Hungarian revolt and 1979, only 2,700 (less than 0.3 percent) originated from noncommunist countries. Refugee admissions since 1980, which were intended to be based more on individual, ideologically and geographically neutral standards, have reflected essentially the same admissions patterns. From October 1981 through September 1990 (data on refugee arrivals are not available for fiscal years 1980 and 1981), 94.8 percent of refugees admitted to the United States originated from the communist world (693,057 from communist-controlled nations; 37,590 from noncommunist nations). By adding two Middle Eastern regimes opposed by U.S. foreign policy in the 1980s—Iran and Iraq—the percentage of refugees originating from "enemy" regimes from communist-dominated lands or the Middle East rises above 99.8 percent, virtually identical to the pattern prior to the *Refugee Act of 1980*.

Central American teenagers at Texas shelter for unaccompanied minors in INS proceedings. "Zacarias is Everyman . . . an 18-year-old who saw the killing—and the killers—on both sides of the conflict and, when forced to make a choice, decided to leave." USCR/B. Frelick

A similar pattern of foreign policy bias emerges on the asylum side with applicants from regimes allied to the United States being overwhelmingly denied, whereas those coming from "enemy" regimes being approved at significantly higher rates.

The existence of internal armed conflict in many of these same states allied to the United States has further complicated the position of nationals of those countries who seek asylum. This is because the existence of civil strife, per se, has become a factor that injects a presumption of ineligibility into the asylum seeker's claim. The asylum seeker in effect must establish a higher level of threat than that generally faced by the population as a whole, or even by a vulnerable subgroup to which the applicant may belong.[8] The U.S. government's interpretation of persecution, therefore, has had the anomalous effect of favoring asylum seekers from less obviously violent and dangerous countries, while essentially requiring the showing of a higher level of persecution from areas where political violence is more widespread. From March 1983 to September 1990, the INS approval rate for asylum seekers from countries experiencing some of the highest levels of internal armed conflict in the world lagged considerably behind countries not experiencing significant levels of civil strife. Asylum approval rates of 13.8 percent for Lebanon, 6.7 percent for Sri Lanka, 2.8 percent for El Salvador, 2 percent for Guatemala, and 1.8 percent for Haiti stood in marked contrast to the 74.5 percent approval rate for the Soviet Union, 69 percent for China, and 62.6 percent for Romania.[9]

INS officials have often stated that they regard Central Americans and Haitians overwhelmingly as economic migrants, not refugees. We are told that Central Americans and Haitians are drawn here by the lure of American jobs, and don't have genuine fears of persecution in their respective homelands. However, a 1987 study by the U.S. General Accounting Office showed that even among asylum seekers making specific claims of having been tortured or similarly persecuted, the INS overwhelmingly rejected the Central American claims. The GAO report compared asylum approval rates for applicants from four countries—Poland, Nicaragua, Iran, and El Salvador—who stated that they were arrested, imprisoned, had their life threatened, or were tortured. Among asylum seekers making such claims, the approval rates were: Iranians, 64 percent; Poles, 55 percent; Nicaraguans, 7 percent; and Salvadorans, 3 percent.[10]

Immigration judges and INS asylum officers may question whether the persecution is real. But psychologists who encounter these refugees know the trauma is real. A recent study conducted at the University of Houston focused on a group of 133 Central American youths in INS detention.[11] Each one was asked to identify events that they had experienced, such as sexual assault, hunger, homelessness, seeing a family member or friend killed. The 133 children interviewed reported, on average, having experienced four of the traumatic events in their country of origin, and nearly all of them also reported traumatic experiences during the journey north. About half of the youths were further studied for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Nearly half of them experienced emotional numbness and suffered flashbacks, 38 percent were undergoing depression, and 22 percent experienced nightmares. At least half showed clinically significant levels of general distress, phobias, and psychotic-like symptoms associated with stress reactions.

Children traveling without parents might be considered especially vulnerable. But the refugee adults and family groups are in bad shape as well. Another recent study of 111 Central American refugee women in Washington, D.C., conducted by the International Catholic Child Bureau,[12] found 85 percent to have been the victims of at least one traumatic event in their home country, and the average woman to have experienced 3.3 events, such as injury, rape, interrogation, threats, house searches, bombings, and gunfire. Twenty-four of the women had been present at a murder.

Being a war refugee is as legitimate a reason for fleeing one's homeland and seeking the protection of another state as is the prospect of political persecution.

In their present lives in the U.S. capital, three-quarters of the women said they were tense, anxious, and unhappy. A majority complained of frequent headaches, fatigue, being easily frightened, being unable to make decisions, or to enjoy daily life. A near majority reported poor appetite, shaking hands, poor sleep, frequent crying, and said they were unable to play a useful part in life. More than a third of the women characterized themselves as "worthless". The children of these women are developing more slowly than normal because their mothers have little emotional strength left to cope with them.

Have these people been persecuted? Are they refugees? Do they really have to satisfy a sophisticated assessment of "political opinion" to qualify?

Today, asylum seekers are being asked to establish not only their own fear of persecution, but the motivations and intentions of their prospective persecutors as well. The Bush Administration's argument in *Zacarias* was that "the persecutor's state of mind is determinative of whether persecution is 'on account of' a political belief held by the victim."[13] The Supreme Court didn't go quite that far, saying that asylum applicants do not have to show "direct proof" of their persecutors' motives, but that they must provide "*some* evidence of it, direct or circumstantial."[14]

A joke circulated among asylum practitioners a few years back about their clients being required to "bring a note from your dictator." It is becoming harder to see where satire ends and reality begins.

Who Decides?

In truth, refugees in the past, as well as refugees today, overwhelmingly have come to be known as such because they "voted with their feet." The act of leaving—which in the communist bloc usually was prohibited and therefore created an almost automatic trip-wire for protection—combined with an expressed fear of persecution upon return were sufficient grounds, if the host country was inclined to accept them. This last factor, which Scanlan and Loescher call the "*calculated* kindness," is the element that has always been present in a host country's willingness to provide asylum.[15] The problem becomes, therefore, not only definitional—"Who is a refugee?"—but also political—"Who decides?" The heart of the matter is state power to grant—or, more to the point, to deny—asylum.

In drafting the Refugee Convention, Western governments rejected a right to asylum. These states were unwilling to make legally binding a right they had all recognized in principle in Article 14 (1) of the nonbinding *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*—"everyone has the right to seek *and to enjoy* in other countries asylum from persecution." [Emphasis added.] This was no mere oversight; a UN conference convened in 1977 with the idea of correcting the problem by drafting an internationally binding convention on the right to asylum was described by Guy Goodwin-Gill as "an abject failure."[16] The OAU Convention, on the other hand, speaks specifically about the obligation of African states to endeavor to "receive refugees and to secure the settlement of those refugees." The Western states are under no such obligation. Their only obligation under the terms of the Refugee Convention and Protocol is not to "expel or return (*refouler*) a refugee . . . to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion." The principle of *nonrefoulement*, as this is called, is interpreted by the U.S. government and some other Western states as meaning that an obligation of nonreturn only exists for refugees meeting the Convention persecution standard. Articulating this view is Kay Hailbronner:

> *Codified refugee law is plainly inapplicable to persons fleeing from generalized violence in their home countries. A customary norm of* nonrefoulement *for humanitarian refugees, however merited on humanitarian grounds, is not now supported by the requirements of broad and consistent state practice and* opinio juris. . . . *Despite the efforts of some observers, international law should not be viewed as demanding an obligation of states to adhere to* nonrefoulement *or provide temporary refuge for all humanitarian refugees.*[17]

U.S. law is even more restrictive than this. The obligation of *nonrefoulement*, according to U.S. law, is based on an even higher standard than the "well-founded fear" of persecution standard used for granting asylum, which is discretionary. It states that the government is actually barred from returning "an alien" only if his "life or freedom would be threatened . . . on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion."[18] In *INS v. Stevic*, the Supreme Court interpreted this to mean that deportation should be withheld only if there was a "clear probability" of persecution. The Court held that the law "literally provides for withholding of deportation only if the alien's life or freedom 'would' be threatened in the country to which he would be deported; it does not require withholding if the alien 'might' or 'could' be subject to persecution."[19]

For a refugee to convince an immigration judge that he "would be threatened" if returned to his home country is far more difficult than convincing the judge that he has a "well-founded fear" of persecution upon return. Although few cases have arisen where judges have ordered a refugee deported who was found to have a well-founded fear of persecution, but failed to establish a clear probability of persecution, this remains a possibility.

One case, *Matter of Salim*,[20] offers the reverse situation: an Afghan refugee was found to have a "clear probability" of persecution if returned to Afghanistan—barring his *refoulement*—but was denied asylum as a matter of discretion (he used false documents), so that he could be deported to another country, such as Pakistan. But what if Salim was only found to have a "well-founded fear of persecution," not a "clear probability?" He would be a refugee, according to U.S. law, but could be denied asylum anyway as a matter of discretion for the same reasons that he was, in fact, denied asylum. Nothing at that point would protect him from *refoulement*.

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has seen this danger and held that discretionary denials of asylum should not be exercised unless factors are found that are "important enough to warrant returning a bona fide refugee to a country where he may face a threat of imminent danger to his life or liberty."[21] It remains to be seen, however, whether the Supreme Court, which reversed the Ninth Circuit in *Zacarias*, will be willing to limit the Attorney General's discretion, particularly since in another recent decision, *INS v. Doherty*, the Court has ruled that the Attorney General has "broad discretion" to deny a motion to reopen a claim for asylum or withholding of deportation.[22]

Asylum—due, in part, to its sorry history in the international convention drafting arena—remains "discretionary" for our government and others as well; it reserves the "right" to deport a refugee with a well-founded fear of persecution.

But what about the other major category of refugees who have fled war and civil strife? Do we accept the argument, as proposed by Hailbronner (above), that their protection against *refoulement* is not even a matter within the sphere of consideration?

Our government certainly didn't consider it when the wars people were fleeing were occurring principally in Central America and Africa. But we are faced with a new reality today. Until now, post-World War II Europe has not been faced with massive displacement due to war. The Cold War was named so precisely because it managed to approach the brink, without actually crossing the line, of all-out war. But now, with Yugoslavia as the first case, full-scale warfare has indeed come to Europe, bringing with it the displacement of more than half a million Croats and Serbs. Suddenly, the OAU and OAS formulations have new relevance.

The reality that the West must confront—and should have confronted long before now—is that being a war refugee

A study of Central American women in Washington, D.C., found that 85 percent had been the victims of a traumatic event in their homeland—injury, rape, interrogations, threats, house searches, bombings, gunfire. B. Fernandez is as legitimate a reason for fleeing one's homeland and seeking the protection of another state as is the prospect of political persecution. Both should be considered as refugees, and the principle of *nonrefoulement*—no forced return—should apply equally to both, as well.

Since the definition of "refugee" itself is undergoing change, as seen in its expansion in Africa and Latin America to include persons fleeing armed conflict, the Western, industrialized democracies can no longer be assured that the forced return of such refugees does not, in fact, violate international law, which forbids the return of a refugee to a territory "where his life or freedom would be threatened." The *nonrefoulement* provision of the Refugee Convention, Article 33, is based on the obligation not to return refugees to life-threatening conditions, but such a threat is posed to both types of refugees, not exclusively to those fearing persecution.

Goodwin-Gill argues that the other category of refugees—those fleeing generalized violence from civil war and intercommunal strife—ought also to be protected by the principle of *nonrefoulement*, and that international customary law regarding *nonrefoulement* has, in fact, grown since 1951 to include them within its protection. He writes:

> *Those who have fled to escape violence, armed conflict or human rights violations are refugees of concern to the UNHCR and the international community and . . . should be protected against* refoulement. . . . *In any procedure relating to the grant, denial, or termination of refuge, those fleeing civil war or intercommunal strife should benefit from the presumption that their life or freedom would be endangered by reason of generalized violence, armed conflict, or massive violations of human rights.*[23]

Sadly, Goodwin-Gill's view seems today to express more of a hope than an accurate reflection of state practice, at least as demonstrated by the U.S. interdiction of Haitian asylum seekers in late 1991 and the forced return of 583 of them until a judge issued a restraining order to determine whether *refoulement* was occurring (the case was still pending in the courts, as of this writing).

The obvious solution to determining whether or not the return of humanitarian refugees is prohibited by international law would be to draft a new refugee convention saying precisely that—essentially, taking the OAU language and universalizing it. Given the current political trends in the West, however, it is well-nigh inconceivable that a meaningful convention would be adopted under which states would compromise their sovereign power to decide asylum claims, and almost as inconceivable that they would entertain the definitions and obligations accepted in Africa and Latin America.

What are we left to do? This essay has dealt only with the presumptions underlying asylum policy. This could leave the erroneous impression that asylum seekers have access to asylum procedures as a matter of course. The opposite may be true. It is safe to surmise that the majority of asylum seekers in the world today never have the opportunity to file a claim. Visa restrictions and airline sanctions ensure that many would-be refugees never succeed in escaping the homelands they seek to flee. Those who manage to leave are often interdicted in some fashion en route, such as Central Americans caught and summarily deported from Mexico.[24] Others are turned away by border guards, such as about 6,000 undocumented persons who sought to enter Austria from Hungary in 1991, who never had an opportunity to file asylum claims.

Given the unwillingness of Western governments to admit asylum seekers and to consider their claims fully, much less to consider broadening their concepts of refugee protection, we must search for alternatives to asylum that still provide a measure of protection. Temporary Protected Status—a feature of the *Immigration Act of 1990* that sets forth criteria, including "ongoing armed conflict," that enable the Attorney General to postpone deportation for certain nationals whose return would "pose a serious threat to their personal safety"—[25] stands as one such example, and represents an important victory for the American refugee rights advocacy network.

But Zacarias, a Guatemalan, is not protected by TPS. It, like asylum, is discretionary. In light of *Zacarias*, there will surely, and appropriately, be a renewed push to designate Guatemalans for TPS. And we will continue to work to lift the barriers blocking access to the asylum process. But our work will always be limited to rearguard actions unless we are able to challenge the presupposition that underlies refugee policy in our own country and throughout the industrialized West: the "refugees today ain't what they used to be" myth that promotes a narrow and rarefied understanding of the term "refugee" itself, thereby denying its application to all but a few of the world's actual refugees. This notion lets governments off the hook: it gives them the latitude to wriggle out from the mandatory obligation they have to all bona fide refugees—whether fleeing the generalized violence of war or the targeted violence of persecution—not to return them forcibly to life-threatening places.

Notes

1. *INS v. Elias-Zacarias*, 502 U.S. ____, No. 90-1342, by Antonin Scalia, January 22, 1992, p. 5.
2. *INS v. Elias-Zacarias*, Reply Brief for Petitioner, p.14.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
4. *INS v. Elias-Zacarias*, Dissent, by John Paul Stevens, January 22, 1992, p. 4.
5. Stevens, *op. cit.*, p. 3
6. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
7. Reply Brief, *op. cit.*, p. 11–13.
8. "There are millions of combat-age males in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua alone, most of whom have reason to fear being approached by guerrillas at some point in their lives." Reply Brief, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
9. *Refugee Reports*, Vol. XII, No. 12 (Washington, D.C., U.S. Committee for Refugees, December 30, 1991) p. 12.
10. *Asylum: Uniform Application of Standards Uncertain—Few Denied Applicants Deported* (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Accounting Office, GAO/GGD-87-33BR, January 1987) p. 42.
11. *Undocumented and Unaccompanied: A Mental-Health Study of Unaccompanied, Immigrant Children from Central America*, by Nestor P. Rodriguez and Ximena Urrutia-Rojas (Houston: University of Houston Law Center, IHELG, Monograph 90-4, 1991).
12. *The Psychosocial Consequences of Violent Displacement: The Experience of Central American Refugee Women in Washington, D.C.*, by Margaret McCallin (New York: International Catholic Child Bureau, 1991).
13. Brief for the Petitioner, *op. cit.*, p. 9–10.
14. *INS v. Zacarias, op. cit.*, p. 6.
15. *Calculated Kindness: Refugees and America's Half-Open Door, 1945-Present*, by Gil Loescher and John A. Scanlan (New York: The Free Press, 1986). See also, *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*, by Aristide R. Zolberg, Astri Suhrke, and Sergio Aguayo (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) p. 6–7.
16. *The Refugee in International Law*, by Guy S. Goodwin-Gill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983) p. 111.
17. "*Nonrefoulement* and 'Hūmanitarian' Refugees," by Kay Hailebronner, in *The New Asylum Seekers: Refugee Law in the 1980s*, David Martin, ed. (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1988), p. 144.
18. Immigration and Nationality Act, 244(h).
19. *INS v. Stevic*, 467 U.S. 407, 104 S.Ct. 2489, 81 L.Ed.2d 321 (1984), p. 2497. See also, *INS v. Cardoza-Fonseca*, 480 U.S. 421, 107 S.CT. 12078, 94 L.Ed.2d 434 (1987).
20. *Matter of Salim*, 18 I&N Dec. 311 (BIA 1982).
21. *Hernandez-Ortiz v. INS*, 777 F.2nd 509, 519 (9th Cir. 1985).
22. *INS v. Doherty*, 502 U.S. ______. No. 90-925, January 15, 1992.
23. "*Nonrefoulement* and the New Asylum Seekers," by Guy Goodwin-Gill, in *The New Asylum Seekers: Refugee Law in the 1980s, op.cit.*, p. 109.
24. See *Running the Gauntlet: The Central American Journey through Mexico*, by Bill Frelick (Washington, D.C.: The U.S. Committee for Refugees, 1991).
25. INA 244A(b)(1)(A).

Buying Time: Refugee Repatriation from Thailand

Court Robinson

Sadako Ogata, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, calls 1992 the "year of voluntary repatriation." Nearly half of UNHCR's $900 million budget request for 1992 is devoted to repatriation initiatives. Thailand, home to more than 500,000 refugees from four different countries, will be a pivotal proving ground as to whether the year will be remembered well or with regret. Cambodians, Laotians, and Vietnamese could go home in significant numbers if all goes well. For the Burmese, it would take a miracle.

The return of 370,000 Cambodians, in particular, is shaping up to be one of the largest, most complex, and most costly repatriation efforts in UNHCR's history. The possibility of safe, voluntary return for Cambodian refugees and displaced persons grows out of the peace agreement signed in Paris on October 23, 1991 by the four contending factions in the Cambodian civil war. Though the UN-sponsored agreement represents a fundamental shift in Cambodian political prospects, it is still only a "peace of paper," as some have called it, and far from secure.

For most of the 57,000 Laotians and 14,000 Vietnamese in Thailand (and the 100,000 Vietnamese boat people in camps elsewhere in Southeast Asia), repatriation is viewed not as a new door opening but the result of other doors closing.

Since an international agreement known as the Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) was put in place in 1989, the terms of asylum in Southeast Asia have become more stringent. Refugee status, once conferred automatically by UNHCR, now must be won through local screening. Only the screened-in are permitted to seek resettlement in another country, while those rejected face eventual return home.

In the absence of fundamental political or social change in their countries, it should not be surprising that only about 17,000 Vietnamese and 9,200 Laotians have gone home voluntarily in the last decade.

Repatriation may be less a virtue than a necessity for Laotians and Vietnamese, and it will be a risky business at best for Cambodians. But for more than 70,000 Burmese asylum seekers in Thailand, a safe return home is a virtual impossibility.

Burma (now renamed Myanmar) is under the control of a military dictatorship with one of the worst human rights records in the world today. It has stifled all democratic dissent, brutalized political opponents and ethnic minorities, and refused to hand over power to a civilian government duly elected in May 1990.

Burmese asylum seekers in Thailand are clearly in the middle of their own "swinging-door" phase, whose only constant is its capriciousness.

Despite the regime's record of widespread and appalling persecution, Burmese asylum seekers in Thailand currently enjoy no international protection and no real status save that of "illegal immigrant," and live under the constant threat of forced return.

With the Thai chapter on Indochinese refugees coming to a close, but a chapter on Burma likely in the early goings, it seems important to ask: what has Thailand learned from its experience with the Indochinese influx, and how much of this could, or should, be applied to Burmese asylum seekers?

Thai law professor and human rights advocate Vitit Muntarbhorn has noted four phases in the development of Thailand's policy toward Indochinese refugees. First was the "preventive" phase from 1975 to 1979, marked by efforts to repel asylum seekers as quickly as possible. If they could not be sent out of Thailand, they were to be detained in camps.

Second came a brief "open door" phase from late 1979 to early 1980, offering temporary haven to all asylum seekers, pending their resettlement overseas or voluntary return home.

Third was the "humane deterrence" phase from 1980 to 1989, whereby Thailand tried to counter the magnet effect of international resettlement by reducing services in the camps to "austere" levels and denying resettlement opportunities to new arrivals.

The fourth phase, beginning in 1989, Muntarbhorn calls the "swinging door," suggesting not only that the door swings both ways but that it is more open for some groups than for others.

For the Indochinese and Burmese seeking temporary haven in Thailand, repatriation will be a preoccupying concern in 1992. The Thai, and the international, response to these concerns either could precipitate crisis—in the form of forced return, fear of reprisals, and failed reintegration—or provide the opportunity to strengthen interim protections while building safer bridges home.

At heart, it may be a matter of buying time.

Repatriation to Cambodia

During the nearly four years that the Khmer Rouge ruled Cambodia before being driven out by Vietnamese forces in early 1979, the radical communist regime was responsible for the deaths of more than one million people through torture, execution, starvation, and forced labor.

In the wake of the Vietnamese invasion, hundreds of thousands of Cambodians fled to the Thai border seeking

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GIVE ME NO FOOD

A Burmese student in Bangkok. "Burmese asylum seekers in Thailand currently enjoy no international protection and no real life status but that of 'illegal immigrant.' They live under constant threat of forced return." Synapses

temporary relief and protection. Some found just the opposite.

In what one writer has called "one of the darkest chapters in the history of Thailand's response to refugees," in June 1979, Thai soldiers rounded up at least 43,000 Cambodians from border encampments, bused them north to the Dangrek mountains, and forced them down the steep cliffs into a Cambodian minefield. Perhaps 10,000 people died.

One month later, as an inducement to Thailand to open its border—as well as a gesture of sympathy for the suffering Cambodians and a judgment against the new communist regime in Phnom Penh—Western nations made an open-ended commitment to resettle Indochinese refugees.

In all, more than 250,000 Cambodian refugees were resettled in the 1980s. And for a brief period, Thailand maintained an "open-door" policy, permitting Cambodians to enter the country without restriction and to enjoy temporary asylum until they were resettled or chose to return home.

Political and numerical pressures persuaded Thailand to abridge this policy in early 1980, declaring that the 160,000 people then in Khao I Dang and other UNHCR-controlled border camps would be allowed to keep their refugee status, but all new arrivals would be considered illegal immigrants without access to UNHCR protection or third-country resettlement.

In 1982, there was born an unholy and uneasy alliance between two noncommunist guerrilla factions and the Khmer Rouge, joined in a common goal to drive the Vietnamese-backed government in Phnom Penh from power. Except for Khao I Dang, the Cambodian border camps became base camps for the resistance.

Keeping a seat in the United Nations and a string of base camps along the Thai border, the tripartite Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea maintained steady political and military pressure on Phnom Penh throughout the last decade. In September 1989, the Vietnamese troops withdrew from Cambodia and two years later, the Phnom Penh regime, led by Prime Minister Hun Sen, agreed to the terms of a UN-sponsored peace plan.

That plan places transitional authority for the administration of Cambodia in the hands of the United Nations until free and fair elections, tentatively scheduled for April 1993, can be held. In the meantime, the "sovereignty, independence, and unity of Cambodia" will reside in a 12-member Supreme National Council (SNC), comprising all four political factions and headed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

But before elections are to be held, the plan stipulates that the Cambodian refugees and displaced persons in Thailand must have a chance to get home.

UNHCR initially estimated that it would need $109 million for the voluntary repatriation program, scheduled to begin in April 1992 and to be completed within six months. The primary objective was to safely transport an estimated 250,000 refugees from Thailand to six reception centers in Cambodia and thence to their village of destination. It was believed that about 100,000 Cambodian refugees would repatriate spontaneously.

But before repatriation could begin, UNHCR insisted that five preconditions must be met:

1) there must be overall peace and security in Cambodia,

2) the government of Cambodia must provide an estimated 150,000 hectares of agricultural settlement land for the returnees,

3) the settlement land must be demined,

4) major access roads and bridges must be repaired, and

5) there must be strong funding support from the donor countries.

Following a visit to Thailand and Cambodia in January 1992, Ogata acknowledged that more time and money would be needed for UNHCR to carry out safe and effective repatriation.

A UNHCR registration conducted in the border camps at the end of 1991 showed a total population of 370,000, all but eight percent of whom said they chose to return with UNHCR. With a much larger number of people to transport home, UN logistical complications and costs have mounted.

Furthermore, systematic land surveying and de-mining only began in February. So, although some of the border population will be able to get home in March and April and begin planting before the rainy season starts in May, many more people will be delayed from leaving until later in the year. This will both prolong the repatriation process and add to the UN budget for interim food and materials.

UNHCR knows it is in a race against time. As Ogata put it, "The desire and the pressure to start soon are very heavy." Refugee camp life has little to recommend it, the erstwhile resistance factions want their people back to vote, and Thailand wants them out, period.

But the impediments to safe return are equally imposing: mines, disease, banditry, and continued instability.

Whatever the timetable, it is clear that Cambodian repatriation faces a host of potential problems and pitfalls, and there will be costs for either moving too slowly or too fast.

On November 21, 1991, the Thai government, the SNC, and UNHCR signed a 29-point memorandum of understanding (MOU), detailing the specific responsibilities of the three contracting parties involved in Cambodian repatriation.

The three parties pledged to cooperate with one another "to ensure that repatriation will be on a voluntary basis . . . [and] shall prevent any attempt by any side to interfere with the exercise of free choice of destination."

In early October 1991, a hard-line faction of the Khmer Rouge military deposed the civilian administration in Site 8, took control of the UN-administered camp in Thailand housing 43,000 Cambodian displaced persons, and announced that the camp population must return to KR-controlled areas in Cambodia.

A storm of international protest ultimately did force the Khmer Rouge leadership to back off on the relocation attempts, but the threat of forced repatriation remains.

UNHCR must move quickly to establish a vigorous, round-the-clock presence in all of the Cambodian refugee camps . . . to reassure an uncertain border population and guard against clandestine forced return.

As of November 1, UNHCR has taken over responsibilities for the border camps from the UN Border Relief Operation (UNBRO), which had no explicit protection mandate. One function of UNHCR clearly defined in the MOU is "the prevention of clandestine organized return."

Addressing a long-standing Thai concern that no refugee populations are left over following repatriation, the MOU binds the three parties "to ensure that there would be no residual problems in Thailand." Several thousand Cambodians in Khao I Dang—the one border camp that has always been under UNHCR administration—have protested the UN peace plan and insist that the only real form of protection is resettlement.

According to the MOU, repatriation will be voluntary, but when "the circumstances that create the status of genuine refugee have ceased to exist, this principle will no longer be relevant." UNHCR says this means that the residents of Khao I Dang or others on the border who do not choose repatriation will be permitted to remain in Thailand probably until elections are held in Cambodia.

With a reasonably stable and democratically elected regime in Phnom Penh, UNHCR and Thai officials would meet with representatives of the new Cambodian government to determine the best course of action for the residual caseload of Cambodians in Thailand. Some family reunion cases might be resettled. Others may be persuaded to go home voluntarily. Many could simply be deported.

If the voluntary repatriation effort runs into trouble, however, the number of hold-outs could grow, and Thai impatience along with it. Standing against the pressures for the quickest possible repatriation is the commitment made in Article 5 of the MOU: "The contracting parties agree that the repatriation of Cambodian refugees and displaced persons under the UN auspices shall take place only when there exist conditions conducive to the safe transportation and return in safety and dignity to places of final destination of the returnees."

According to a recent report by Asia Watch and the Physicians for Human Rights, "Cambodia today has the highest percentage of mine amputees of any country in the world." At least 36,000 people have lost one or more limbs to a land mine. There may be 400,000 mines in the western provinces alone, where most of the returnees will resettle. If people begin to move back in advance of accurate land surveys and de-mining operations, the casualties could be substantial.

In addition to mines are the risks of malaria and water-borne diseases, banditry, and new outbreaks of factional fighting. In late January, the Khmer Rouge shelled several villages in northwestern Cambodia, killing several dozen people and displacing about 10,000.

There are currently more than 180,000 people displaced inside Cambodia. Bringing returnees back from Thailand too soon would only swell these numbers.

How is UNHCR to reconcile the two conflicting imperatives to carry out a repatriation program that is both swift and safe? The best answer under the circumstances is, as the Romans would say, to *festina lente*, or "make haste slowly."

UNHCR must move quickly to establish a vigorous, round-the-clock presence in all of the Cambodian refugee camps, bolstered by an effective information campaign, both to reassure an uncertain border population and guard against clandestine, forced return.

Furthermore, as one official put it, "UN authority on the border must no longer be simply theoretical." It is both ironic and telling that UNHCR finally has been given responsibility for the entire Cambodian refugee population in Thailand when it is time for them to go home. Although it is being exercised in the context of a voluntary repatriation program, the UNHCR protection mandate must not be abridged, either by the factions or Thai authorities.

At the same time, inside Cambodia, de-mining and reconstruction must begin in earnest. Every effort must be made to help the internally displaced persons return to their homes before substantial repatriation gets underway.

For the international community, money is a key factor in dictating the safest possible terms for repatriation. The UNHCR special appeal for $109 million is still badly underfunded (the U.S. contribution was just $5 million going into 1992), and the bill for the UN transitional administration of Cambodia could come to $2 billion or more.

Repatriation to Vietnam

Although Vietnamese boat refugees in Thailand have never numbered more than 16,000, their political significance has always far outweighed their numerical impact. It might be said that, since 1979, the Vietnamese boat people enjoyed the best and the worst of Thai refugee policy.

There have been violent and widespread pushbacks of Vietnamese boats, particularly in 1979 and 1988, and initial state indifference to the horrors of Thai piracy in the early 1980s. But for ten years, no refugee group in Thailand moved faster from arrival to departure for resettlement than the Vietnamese boat people.

Say Sara, a Cambodian American, is able to visit his home village for the first time in more than a decade. He embraces the wife of the village elder who helped raise him. Dr. Tom Kirch

The first international conference on Indochinese refugees held in Geneva in July 1979 had been constructed around a basic *quid pro quo* of "an open shore for an open door." In order to halt the pushbacks of Indochinese refugees (the Malaysians and Indonesians also were turning away Vietnamese boats in large numbers), Western nations, led by the United States, pledged to resettle them.

But when boat arrivals surged in the late 1980s after a seven-year decline, that reciprocal understanding suffered a decisive challenge. Alarmed at an influx of more than 11,000 Vietnamese in 1987, three times the number for the previous year, Thailand brought the hammer down again. In January 1988, Thai authorities erected a naval blockade to interdict Vietnamese boats and turn them back to sea.

Although first asylum was restored several months later, Thailand's actions were an important catalyst in convening a second Geneva conference on Indochinese refugees in 1989 and constructing a new set of regional and international understandings.

The keys to the new framework, the Comprehensive Plan of Action, are screening and repatriation. Vietnamese boat arrivals now must submit to an initial status determination interview, or screening, by a local immigration official. Those who are screened in are eligible to seek resettlement in a third country, while the screened-out face eventual repatriation.

Thai approval rates of Vietnamese applicants for refugee status in the last two years have averaged 17 percent, among the lowest in the region. The screening process is among the slowest in the region, as well: as of December 1991, about 10,300 people had been screened, of whom 600 had been approved and 2,600 rejected, leaving a backlog of more than 7,200 with decisions pending. Thai officials say that rejected cases will not be permitted to have their appeals heard until all initial decisions have been rendered. At the current rate, that process could take years.

Given this record, it is not at all surprising that Vietnamese boat arrivals in Thailand plummeted from 9,050 in 1990 when screening was first implemented to a mere 156 people through September 1991. By the same token, voluntary repatriation of Vietnamese from Thailand totalled 179 people from

1979 to the end of 1990. In the first eight months of 1991, however, 1,424 boat people in Thailand went home.

One can certainly fault Thai authorities for the pace of interviewing and for procedural defects—lack of pre-screening counseling and poor translations, for example—that suppress approval rates. But since implementation of the CPA in 1989, Thailand has not engaged in pushbacks, it has continued to fight piracy vigorously and effectively, and it has made no effort to return any Vietnamese involuntarily.

Repatriation to Laos

Despite periodic downturns in Thai policy and occasional pushbacks, Laotian asylum seekers have been granted a fairly steady welcome in Thailand. Roughly 300,000 Laotian refugees who fled into Thailand have been permitted to resettle abroad since 1975, more than two thirds of them going to the United States.

The lowland Lao migration, in particular, has quietly lost its edge of crisis and become almost normal border traffic. In 1991, only about 600 lowland Lao crossed into Thailand and nearly 800 went home voluntarily or without objection. There were no incidents of pushbacks or abuse reported on either side.

The situation for the Hmong and other highland ethnic groups, who still number around 50,000 in Thailand, is more problematic. The Thai government has announced that the largest Hmong camp, Ban Vinai, will close in 1992 and insists that it is time for the Hmong to make up their minds: resettle in the United States or go back to Laos.

But what do the Hmong want? The question has baffled refugee officials for more than a decade. Offered virtual guarantees of resettlement in America, the Hmong have held back in droves. Voluntary repatriation, available through a UNHCR-monitored program since 1980, is far less popular. Of the 9,200 Laotians who have returned home through official channels, only about 750 are Hmong. For the moment, the clear choice of the Hmong in Thailand is to wait and see.

In the summer of 1990, a Ford Foundation-funded survey in Ban Vinai camp found that 54 percent said they preferred to repatriate to Laos and 46 percent chose resettlement in another country. But of those choosing resettlement, more than 70 percent said they would prefer to delay departure until after 1992. Likewise, of those who chose repatriation over resettlement, nearly 80 percent said they were unwilling to return to Laos until significant political changes occurred.

As time goes on, the choice to delay will become harder to sustain and costlier to redeem. On the resettlement side, U.S. commitments to the Hmong are very strong, but they are not open-ended. If 20,000 Hmong suddenly opted for resettlement, there is no telling how many spaces might be available for them.

In June 1991, Thailand, Laos, and UNHCR agreed to a set of "basic principles" for repatriation, which state that it must take place "under safe, humane, and UNHCR-monitored conditions." Repatriation does not, however, need to be voluntary: "those considered to be refugees and asylum seekers returning under the program will do so on a voluntary basis, whereas those rejected in the screening process will be returned without the use of force in safety and dignity."

In the first nine months of 1991, the UNHCR office in Vientiane reported that it had provided assistance to a total of

A land mine victim recovers from surgery in the Mongkol Borei hospital. At least 36,000 Cambodians have lost limbs to land mines. USCR/C. Robinson

386 highland Lao (including 288 Hmong) and 212 lowlanders. All had been screened-out as nonrefugees and were returned involuntarily.

Although Laotian asylum seekers are included in the CPA agreements, a screening program for Laotians has been operating, at least fitfully, along the Thai border since July 1985. As of December 1991, a total of 13,255 lowland Lao had been screened, of whom 10,239 were screened in and 2,924 had been screened out. In marked contrast to the Vietnamese, Thai officials have approved 78 percent of lowland Lao for refugee status.

The rate is even higher for the Hmong and other highland groups: 19,674 highlanders have been screened in and 3,684 rejected, for an approval rate of 84 percent.

Absent a systematic, independent review, it is hard to say how fair the screening process is for Laotian asylum seekers. The approval rates are certainly healthy, but the program has been plagued in years past with problems of corruption and inaccessibility.

Still harder to gauge is the difference between involuntary and forced return. In late January 1991, under cover of darkness, Thai authorities removed 59 screened-out Hmong from Chiang Kham camp and repatriated them to Laos. While accounts differ as to the degree of force that was used, the episode displayed little consideration for safety and less for dignity.

UNHCR insists that all is well on both sides of the Mekong River: "All allegations of violence against returning asylum seekers have proven incorrect," said a UNHCR statement in mid-1991, and "the Bangkok government has reaffirmed that force will not be used in the repatriation process." But UNHCR warned that if significant repatriation cannot be maintained, "the voluntary repatriation and resettlement agreement . . . will lose momentum and refugees may be returned by force."

Voluntary repatriation to Laos, in fact, is in danger of losing momentum. An increase in resistance activity inside Laos and on the border has put new pressures on the Hmong not to return. Some of the lowland Lao voice new concerns about their political and economic prospects back home.

Given such a climate, it is important that Thailand not try to force the issue by stepping up involuntary repatriation. That would be counterproductive at best and potentially disastrous.

Offered resettlement in the United States, the Hmong in Thailand have held back in droves. Repatriation to Laos is far less popular. USCR/C. Robinson

Repatriation to Burma

Burmese asylum seekers in Thailand number about 70,000, most of whom are ethnic minority groups—Karen, Mon, Pa-O, and others—living along the Thai-Burmese border.

When Karen refugees first began to cross into Thailand in significant numbers in 1984, growing to more than 18,000 by 1986, Thailand responded benignly. So long as the Karen kept to their designated areas along the Thai-Burmese border, they generally were not threatened with repatriation. The Thai government, perhaps fearing the "internationalization" of its western borders, prohibited any assistance or protection by UNHCR but did permit private relief groups to provide food and medical aid.

The situation became vastly more combustible in late 1988, when more than 7,000 Burmese students fled to the border in the wake of a bloody crackdown by the Burmese army on pro-democracy demonstrations. Roughly 2,000 crossed into Thai territory.

Thailand's first instinct, as articulated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was to grant temporary asylum. But military and security concerns quickly asserted themselves and, by December 1988, the Burmese and Thai governments were cooperating in the repatriation of Burmese students through the Tak Repatriation Center. At least some of the 350 students who returned to Burma via this center did so unwillingly and paid with their lives.

With the closing of the Tak center at the end of March 1989, Thai authorities announced that all Burmese students remaining in Thailand would be considered illegal immigrants, subject to arrest and deportation.

In addition to the ethnic minority groups and student activists, it is estimated that about 160,000 other Burmese are living in Thailand without documentation. Many are engaged in cross-border trade or have crossed into Thailand seeking temporary employment, but some have fled the risk of forced conscription, porterage, or other forms of abuse at the hands of the Burmese authorities.

Thailand has been willing to make modest concessions for select groups of Burmese asylum seekers, but insists that the vast majority are simply illegal, deportable aliens. Since 1989, Thai authorities have repatriated thousands of Burmese—including students and ethnic minorities—and resisted virtually every offer of international assistance.

If one were to make a wish list for Burmese in Thailand it would include, first of all, a moratorium on all forced repatriation and a grant of refugee status for anyone showing a well-founded fear of persecution, with international protection and assistance available through UNHCR. At the same time, such asylum should not be curtailed by arbitrary and prolonged detention, or limited to certain groups or geographical areas, and should provide the opportunity for study or employment.

If Thailand were a signatory to the *1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees*, and it should be, there would be grounds, under international law, to seek such relief for Burmese asylum seekers.

But Thailand is not a signatory, and its own immigration laws carry no provisions of asylum for those fleeing persecution. So if the international community is to play any role at all in shaping a Thai response to refugees, it must do so on an *ad hoc* basis.

Burmese asylum seekers in Thailand are clearly in the middle of their own "swinging door" phase, whose only constant is its capriciousness. Mon and Karen refugees in camps in Sangklaburi Province are threatened with deportation, while in Tak Province next door, they are left alone. UNHCR is permitted to issue "letters of concern" to students and other vulnerable Burmese in Bangkok, then is told the letters will not be recognized by Thai police.

Thai authorities insist they have adopted a "live and let live" approach to the Burmese students, then persist in their round-ups, detentions, and repatriations. The students, to some degree, play along with this cat-and-mouse game because it permits them to stay in Bangkok and the alternative, in their view, might be worse: living in a "safe area" outside of Bangkok under the control of the Ministry of Interior.

In the midst of this muddle, a few things are clear. Terms of asylum for the Burmese that are both humane and practical must try to avoid reliance on closed camps or significant international resettlement. Thailand fears the pull of resettlement as much as the Burmese fear detention.

It is also clear that most Burmese in Thailand deserve refugee status. But is it conceivable, in light of Thailand's experience with the Indochinese, that it would provide refugee status outside the confines of a camp? If not, which would the students, or the ethnic minorities, choose? And won't refugee status, furthermore, require screening, which would create significant numbers of screened-out, who could then be sent back to Burma?

Conclusion

Through the course of all four phases of Thai policy for Indochinese refugees, there has been one abiding reality: asylum in Thailand has had a fence around it. Freedom to stay, in effect, was bought with freedom to move. But closed camps alone would not have been sufficient to maintain open borders. That required international commitments to support, first, resettlement and later, repatriation.

Just what has Thailand learned from its experience with the Indochinese influx? It has learned certainly that refugee flows chart their own, often unpredictable, course. They cannot be turned on or off, except at great risk to human life and international prestige.

Thailand, one suspects, has learned that balance is important in crafting refugee policy. Concerns for state security and sovereignty must be weighed against basic humanitarian imperatives. The freedom of "going it alone" must be weighed against the costs of doing so. And the desire for flexibility must be balanced by the need for consistency.

Agreements like the MOU on Cambodian repatriation and the CPA for Vietnamese and Laotian asylum seekers have given Thailand the means to balance its domestic concerns about refugee burdens with international commitments of burden-sharing. These regional and international agreements also provide both a context and a rationale for asylum as a temporary haven pending a more durable solution like resettlement or safe return.

There is no question that the Indochinese refugee experience casts a long shadow in Thailand, but it should not, and need not, be definitive for other groups. International agreements on Cambodians, Laotians, and Vietnamese—if they are to work at all—depend on the fulfillment of mutual obligations on the part of countries of origin, countries of asylum, and the international community.

It took 14 years to reach this point for Indochinese asylum seekers, and there are still many doubts and difficulties to overcome. There are no safe bridges home for Burmese in Thailand, and none likely as long as the dictatorship prevails.

With the possible exception of the brief "open door" phase (and that was purchased with closed camps and massive resettlement), there is no phase of Thai policy for Indochinese refugees, or even combination of policies, that makes sense for the Burmese.

What might best serve Burmese asylum seekers, at least in the interim, could build upon a policy, and a law, that served refugees in Thailand prior to the Indochinese exodus. Thailand's Displaced Persons Act of 1954 provides temporary asylum to persons "who escape from danger due to an uprising, fighting, or war and enter in breach of the Immigration Act."

While technically considered illegal immigrants, in earlier times, some groups of "displaced persons" were issued Thai ID cards and allowed to pursue education or employment. Ironically enough, these groups included about 40,000 Vietnamese who fled their country between 1945 and 1955 and 30,000 Burmese, many of them Karen, fleeing civil war in 1959.

It is possible to hope that Thai policy toward Indochinese asylum seekers is entering a fifth and final phase, marked by even-handed fulfillment of its regional and international commitments. Not a swinging door any longer—with its pushbacks, forced repatriations, and unpredictable policy shifts—but a two-way street.

But there is a war on in Burma, both a civil war and a violent war of ideas. Unfortunately for Thailand and Burma's other neighbors, the traffic of refugees is running only one way: out. There are many questions to answer about what to call these people, where to put them, and, ultimately, what to do with them. But, as Thailand knows all too well, that will take time. The world has shown it is ready to help find the answers, but right now there is only one. Let them stay.

Beyond Famine: New Dynamics in Post-War Ethiopia and Eritrea

Jeffrey Clark

[Editor's Note: Since February 1992, when this article was completed, continuing political strife, increased banditry, and a poor international response to Ethiopia's reconstruction needs, particularly from the United States, have dimmed the prospects for Ethiopia's immediate future.]

The collapse of the Mengistu dictatorship, the end of the 30-year war over Eritrea's status, and the abatement of multiple civil wars across Ethiopia offer considerable hope for the end of famine and massive human suffering in much of the Horn of Africa. Transitions now underway in Ethiopia and Eritrea present opportunities for realizing long-delayed humanitarian objectives and for increasingly democratic systems and the rule of law to replace arbitrary and brutal authoritarianism. While successful transitions are far from assured, the possibilities for substantial progress on a number of fronts crucial to millions of lives have never been more encouraging.

The corresponding international responsibility to assist the transformation process is clear. The chance to break the grip of famine must not be lost; the enormous investments in relief during the past decade cannot be dishonored with anything short of generous support for reconciliation and development. Surely the end purpose of the torturous and protracted scramble to reach the hungry and displaced has been to help them have more normal and productive lives.

The United States, the United Nations, the international donor community, and all of those involved in humanitarian concerns have an obvious stake in assisting orderly transitions to peace, democracy, constitutional/participatory systems of government, and economic revitalization, as such transitions are fundamental to ending the cycle of famine that has long stalked the region.

"Ultimately, the demoralizing dependency of Ethiopians upon relief must be lowered and the dignity of the proud people of this ancient land respected." USCR/H. Ruiz

Famine in the Horn has stemmed from political and economic factors once considered beyond the reach of humanitarian agencies. But today the basic equations have changed. It is now realistic to discuss external assistance for fundamental transformations in governance[1] and a shift from relief to a long-term development focus, just as it is feasible to envision new regional approaches to humanitarian concerns. Instability in Ethiopia and Eritrea have long fueled chaos across the Horn, and sustained progress there can have only positive implications for grappling with the continuing Sudanese and Somali emergencies.

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Such progress will not come easily. The collapse of the Mengistu regime thrusts forward a series of challenges to the integrity, imagination, and strength of donor governments and the international and nongovernmental humanitarian assistance agencies as well as indigenous institutions. Mengistu's vile excesses no longer mask the failures or shortcomings of various entities. Dramatic reappraisals of purpose and approach are required; the opportunities and obligations of the present have replaced the limitations of the past.

This article explores several aspects of the new dynamics in the Horn and the related prospects of moving beyond famine relief as the proper focus of humanitarian entities.

Implications for Internal Relief

Cross border relief operations and the problematic movement of food over uncertain lines of military control are no longer required for reaching the vast majority of those in need in Ethiopia or Eritrea. As supply lines open, it is possible to better rationalize and to consolidate relief operations. Greater access also allows greater accuracy in estimating need and targeting assistance as well as increased confidence in launching food for work and rehabilitation projects.

The altered circumstances allow for measured consideration and implementation of ways to prevent the onset of massive famine. The horrifying scenarios of 1984/85 when millions of people were driven from their homes in a desperate and often futile search for food are not recurring today. There are no massive relief camps comparable to those of previous years of crisis. The chilling scenes of thousands of children dying from starvation are not being witnessed.

In Ethiopia, the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) is poised to become a far more legitimate and trustworthy partner of international donor agencies. The U.S. government, among other donors, is now prepared to support RRC programs, potentially including training and technical assistance to the RRC itself. (The United States has not channeled any relief through Ethiopian government agencies since an allocation of 50,000 metric tons of emergency food aid in early 1985—despite the U.S. Agency for International Development's (AID) status as by far the largest bilateral donor.)

The political transition underway also will permit donor governments, again most significantly the United States, to consider proposals from nongovernmental humanitarian agencies for rehabilitation, reconstruction, and development programs formerly prohibited by circumstances if not law. The widening of AID's perspective will broaden the programatic range of action of the private assistance agencies dependent upon U.S. financial support.

In addition, the end of civil war and the Transitional Government of Ethiopia's new policies on trade and agriculture should help reduce the impact of regional food deficits and restore the mechanisms by which households have traditionally supplemented their food supply in years of adverse agricultural conditions.

If economic stagnation deteriorates into a free-fall, there is a significant prospect of urban instability in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia's production of cereals and pulses from the main growing season is estimated to be 6.47 million tons, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. This is slightly below last year's crop, but still above average. The food aid requirement of 160,000 tons of structural food aid and 620,000 tons of exceptional assistance will not differ much from the past year. The critical difference will be an increased capacity to target relief to assure a more rational supply to those in need and a vastly expanded ability to use the food aid as a tool in the rehabilitation of agriculture.

More ominously, however, banditry and violence from organized gangs of black marketeers—a product of diminished central authority over the periphery of the old Ethiopian empire—are disrupting the transport of relief and other commodities in Hararghe, the Ogaden, and elsewhere. Various ethnic groups in the Ogaden are attacking relief convoys demanding a percentage of the food being transported through their traditional home areas, reportedly more out of a perceived sense of exclusion from the government's programs than actual need. Similar raids are reported in western locations near Gambela. Serious clashes between various ethnic militias, particularly the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF)—the dominant element in the transitional government—are even more threatening.

The capacity of the transitional government in Addis to contain these and similar clashes, without unraveling the unsteady coalition represented in the Council of Representatives, is being sharply tested. So far, the government has made a conscious decision not to intervene heavy handedly in many such situations, preferring to minimize ethnic and political pressures. It is, however, providing armed escorts to relief convoys in some areas.

Intermittent armed struggles between the Afar and government forces in Djibouti, though potentially of great seriousness, have not significantly interfered with relief operations inside Ethiopia and have not interrupted the operation of the port—vital for Ethiopian relief and commercial traffic.

Eritrea

In Eritrea, a highly efficient Eritrean Relief Association (ERA), an affiliate of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), in collaboration with the World Food Program (WFP) and the Eritrean Catholic Secretariat, is moving swiftly to ensure a comprehensive food distribution network. This effective, critical partnership has rapidly expanded its reach. As early as last September, 25 new feeding centers were operating in areas formerly under Ethiopian control, and programs were being readied for handling the needs of Eritreans returning from the Sudan. (Some 1,000 families per month were returning in the autumn of 1991 without benefit of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees repatriation program slated for early 1992. The UNHCR program has now somewhat successfully begun, despite the hesitation of some families to return due to Eritrea's devastated infrastructure. A January 1992 UN appeal sought some $50 million to

A Somali resident of Dar Anagi refugee camp in eastern Ethiopia. "The supply of food and the number of people in Dar Anagi have little direct connection. Relief officials' estimates of camp population vary widely, and the arrival and distribution of food is arbitrary." J. Clark

facilitate the repatriation of Eritreans from the Sudan.)

An important UNICEF-assisted project to expand primary health care, water, and sanitation programs in Eritrea has also begun, and UNICEF is operating an emergency feeding program for over 40,000 severely malnourished children. The relationship between the Provisional Government of Eritrea and UNICEF and WFP is cooperative, and the government has signalled an interest in an expanded role for international private agencies in relief and development programs.

Eritrea's current dependency on food assistance is staggering. Approximately 80 percent of its population is in need of food aid, according to ERA, including food subsidies for urban unemployed and underemployed. The dependency could well worsen as more refugees return, straining extremely limited resources. Rains in most of Eritrea during 1991 were poor and, of course, many farmers were unable to plant due to warfare and an acute lack of seeds. The latest harvests fell well short of consumption requirements. While the efficiency of relief operations in Eritrea has to date kept a serious situation from becoming critical, generous response to international appeals for relief and rehabilitation assistance by donors and the pragmatic resolution of political issues by authorities in Asmara and Addis will be required to sustain progress.

A primary issue for Eritrean and Ethiopian authorities to resolve has been use of the port at Massawa for delivering food to Tigray and Wello provinces in northern Ethiopia, a far more cost effective and efficient mode of supplying relief to these areas than reliance on the southern route from Assab. Agreement in principle has been reached and improvements in the Massawa port facilities are covered in the January UN appeal. (In November, 150,000 mt of relief commodities were piled up in Assab—a troubling indication of the difficulties Ethiopia will experience if it remains overly dependent on Assab as the entry point for approximately one million tons of relief annually, although the off-take has subsequently improved and there is now discussion of constructing a large grain depot near the port.)

Regional Implications

The events of May and June 1991 dramatically altered the status and location of hundreds of thousands of refugees throughout the Horn. Southern Sudanese refugees formerly present in the Gambela region fled Ethiopia, mostly to southern Sudan and Uganda (several thousand have returned to Ethiopia). Eritrean refugees in the Sudan, many resident there for several decades, have now begun repatriating. Donor assistance to an ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) operation allowed the complete repatriation from Sudan of some 50,000 former Ethiopian soldiers who had fled after the collapse of the Mengistu government in May.

The departure of the Sudanese refugees from Ethiopia presents a challenge and an opportunity to Ethiopian and UN officials to overcome political and logistical obstacles and open relief supply routes into southern Sudan where thousands of civilians are at risk of starvation.

Declining levels of security in Hararghe and the Ogaden, the grossly incompetent UNHCR management of refugee camps located there, and the relative stability present in northern Somalia (within the proclaimed Somaliland Republic) raise serious questions over the continued validity of the refugee camps supported by the UNHCR in eastern Ethiopia and present compelling reasons for swift action to repatriate as many Somali refugees as possible. The refugee camps in the eastern areas have long served primarily to channel resources across the border to various clans in conflict with each other. Conditions within the camps are abysmal (see box). Attention could more appropriately now be focused on the removal of land mines and other barriers to repatriating the refugees to Somaliland and closing the camps. Many people are spontaneously returning in any case.

UNHCR and the World Food Program have been slow to commence serious efforts to assist the repatriation of the Somali refugees, though the UN's plans for moving some 3,000 tons of food from the port at Djibouti to northern Somalia could perhaps signal new resolve.

If the United Nations were to find itself capable of forging a new, comprehensive regional approach to problems long intractable in isolation and international donors were to fund the required rehabilitation and repatriation programs, the nightmarish refugee camps could at last largely be shut down.

Further progress on addressing the critical needs of refugees and the victims of drought and dislocation could be achieved if participating governments and the United Nations approach the proposed Horn of Africa summit on famine prevention aggressively and honestly. First broached by Rep. Tony Hall, chairman of the House Select Committee on Hunger in a September conversation with Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi, the summit is to devise a regional plan for relief that could lower the political interference that has so hindered operations in the past. The meeting—which, at this writing in February, is anticipated to occur as early as March 1992—is expected to bring together the leaders of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan and Djibouti, as well as various Somali factions. Those attending would attempt to reach accords that would specify that governments could not hinder UN humanitarian relief operations. Rep. Hall has said that the summit should produce "a codified, legal system of humanitarian intervention and safe-passage agreements" that would provide a blueprint for similar relief operations in zones of conflict around the world.[2]

It may be optimistic to believe that the political will to fully deliver on that charge exists. But the potential of the summit is enormous. For the UN, the summit represents nothing less than an unprecedented opportunity to move forward decisively on a regional basis to reduce the prospects of famine and to facilitate the repatriation of millions of refugees. For governments in the region, the summit provides a chance to demonstrate new commitments to humanitarian objectives.

A More Relevant United Nations?

The UN humanitarian assistance system[3] is faced with demonstrating that it can be newly responsive and relevant to the realities found in the Horn of Africa. Given the decidedly mixed results of the UN involvement in the Horn's tragic history over the past decade, its capacity for such a response, regrettably, is questionable, though the demise of the Cold War does create new possibilities.

One immediate task ought to be a frank analysis of what lessons can be drawn from the experiences in Ethiopia and Eritrea to guide the UN in restructuring its overall humanitarian policies and programs to make them more accountable to those in need of protection and assistance.[4] A candid appraisal of operations in the Horn is vital to efforts at UN headquarters in New York to approach a system overhaul. Such an appraisal would complement the recent appointment of Jan Eliasson, a career diplomat from Sweden, as UN Emergency Relief Coordinator at the level of under-secretary general. Eliasson's appointment follows the General Assembly's December resolution calling for the creation of such a position and a strengthened UN mandate and capacity to respond to various humanitarian emergencies. A valid appraisal would also graphically illustrate the tragic manifestations of the currently proscribed roles of UN humanitarian agencies.

A clear responsibility to help anchor democracy is being inexplicably jeopardized by U.S. inaction.

No humanitarian crisis has had the sustained attention of the world community as has that of Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. Billions of dollars in contributions from governments, private agencies, and individuals have been generated, much of it channeled through the UN. The field staff assigned to the management of UN emergency programs since 1984 number in the thousands, administrative budgets in the tens of millions of dollars. But despite the focus and the resources made available, the role of the United Nations relief agencies during the period has, with some major exceptions, been troubled.

The UN (certainly not alone) responded slowly to the early signals of looming catastrophe in Ethiopia in 1983/84. Hands tied by "protocol", its agencies were then frequently manipulated by the Mengistu regime, its aid often targeted by the government's political considerations. Too much food found its way to the army, and the Workers' Party of Ethiopia (WPE)—Mengistu's political organ. Direct assistance to the relief organizations affiliated with the Eritrean and Tigrayan resistance forces was blocked, even though these agencies were assisting millions of those most severely affected by drought, war, and displacement. (The senior officials of those relief groups are now managing the official Eritrean and Ethiopian relief entities, some with unflattering views of UN relief operations.)

While the stewardship of the two special coordinators[5] for the UN relief operations in Ethiopia during the 1980s was exemplary, the various agencies themselves have consistently resisted coordination and central planning.[6] Some UN officials themselves privately describe interagency rivalry as a greater obstacle at times than those imposed by logistical and other constraints.

The UN's performance in Somalia's tragic chaos of the last year has been little less than a genuine disgrace. One administration relief official referred to the UN's "failure to engage themselves" and to the "unreasonable" stance of UN officials.[7] Rather than move to counter the dangerous vacuum in Somalia after the overthrow of the Siyad Barre government in early 1991, the UN allowed the lack of a recognized government being present to keep it from aggressively responding to the catastrophe confronting the Somali people.

The failure to provide security for UN humanitarian operations, anchored in the larger weaknesses of the UN system, has sharply curtailed a role in assisting Somalis. Security concerns blocked the UN from operating in Mogadishu almost entirely, although both AID and the ICRC managed relief flights into the capital and several private agencies have operated in Mogadishu through much of the crisis. Dangerous circumstances in Mogadishu do not in any case justify the failure to move on opportunities in the northern regions of the country.

In the Sudan, with the exception of the flurry of activity surrounding *Operation Lifeline Sudan*—a UN-led operation to move relief assistance through "corridors of tranquility" into zones of conflict—hollow claims of sovereignty by the Bashir junta have kept the UN distant from the Khartoum government's onslaught against the people in the south. The government has dictated narrow parameters for relief operations that have

Hell on Earth: A Trip to Dar Anagi

Jeffrey Clark

Along Ethiopia's harsh and remote eastern border with Somalia, an hour's drive from the town of Jijiga, lies the Dar Anagi camp, formed spontaneously early in 1991 by Somali refugees and Ethiopian returnees, following the overthrow of the Somali government. A brief visit there on September 19, in the company of high-ranking UN officials and others, placed in sharp relief the insecurity, anarchy, ineptitude and frustration that permeate local relief efforts. Virtually every elementary task— meeting basic human needs, sustaining food relief channels, assuring security, acquiring the barest understanding of what populations comprise the camp and how many people are present, or devising and executing a plan of action to repatriate Somali refugees and reintegrate Ethiopian returnees—remains unfulfilled.

Officially, the UN then estimated Dar Anagi to be home to 104,000 people, though no comprehensive enumeration exercise has yet been undertaken. Based on a quiet survey of the number of children under five years of age, camp managers guessed the actual total number of people present to be in the range 35,000–40,000. That knowledge notwithstanding, food distributions, when provided, went to an estimated 60,000 to 70,000. Where excess food eventually migrated, aside from working its way into the marketplace at the center of the camp, was anyone's guess.

The same was true in terms of determining what portion of the camp population are refugees, what portion returnees, and what portion local residents simply eager for relief. There was no UN plan of action, for the present or the future; the eventual return of refugees to Somalia and the reintegration of Ethiopian returnees were, at best, vague hypotheticals. By all appearances, the response of the UN to the spontaneous appearance of Dar Anagi had been, and was still, purely ad hoc.

Insecurity and Confusion Pervaded.

Overland supply routes, from Djibouti to Dire Dawa (by road and rail) and onward (by road) to Jijiga and Dar Anagi, remained vulnerable to violent disruptions, a function of generalized banditry and armed conflict between organized Issa and Oromo groups vying for maximum local power, in anticipation of eventual regional elections. A UN airlift, from Djibouti to Jijiga, served, at best, as a partial offset to the region's instability. Flights were irregular, often irrational, communications and coordination exceedingly weak, and road transport from Jijiga as subject as any to the violent unpredictability of the area. UN food monitors, based in Jijiga and highly constrained due to a lack of transport, were only partially informed of conditions in Dar Anagi and had only limited opportunity to press effectively for logistical improvements.

Inside Dar Anagi, conditions were equally disturbing. Many residents were heavily armed, easily able to intimidate and, when necessary, overpower both the refugee committee responsible for order and recently reorganized local authorities. Shootings, holdups during distributions, and looting of warehouses had become commonplace. Hours before the delegation's arrival, on the previous evening, armed local residents, angry at the camp's encroachment upon their land and resources, destroyed an emergency child feeding facility erected by Save the Children/UK.

At visit's end, two high-ranking UN officials loudly admonished the head of the camp refugee committee that the international community's patience with the refugee situation in eastern Ethiopia had grown thin. They hinted that future food supplies might be reduced, while vaguely expressing the hope that conditions (water, supplies, removal of land mines, electricity) could soon be improved in northern Somalia so that many could return home. In closing, the officials quickly ran down a list of instructive exhortations to the camp's leadership: protect UN and NGO staff; correct the appalling sanitation conditions in the camp; upgrade camp roads; and relocate the marketplace. Minutes later, the delegation was back on the road to Jijiga, its work completed. A crowd of several hundred visibly unhappy camp residents attempted to block the convoy of vehicles. No one stopped, however, as it was possible to strike into the bush and circumvent the demonstration.

The problems at Dar Anagi (and Teferi Ber and elsewhere) are not so easy to curcumvent, however. The ineptitude of responsible officials erects too large an obstacle.

Photo Credit: UNHCR/A. Hollmann

excluded hundreds of thousands of people in immediate and dire need. The UN has largely acquiesced to government demands.

By far the most urgent role for the UN in the Horn today is to take vigorous and bold steps to move large numbers of refugees out of relief camps and back to their home regions—Somalis to Somalia, Ethiopians to Ethiopia, Eritreans to Eritrea—and to secure adequate relief agency access to the southern Sudanese formerly in western Ethiopia and others similarly marooned.

Relief and Development

Now is the time to plan and coordinate the phasing-out of as many emergency operations in the region as possible. It is time to plan the dismantling of the international famine response regime that has taken up permanent residence in Addis Ababa and to contemplate that network's radical transformation from a collaborative emergency operation to a coalition of development partners assisting and supporting the even more difficult task of constructing modern states from the inherited chaos. UN leadership in achieving these goals would be a tremendous contribution, ultimately far more significant than its direct management of logistical operations that can better be coordinated by Eritrean and Ethiopian officials.

In Ethiopia and Eritrea today, the UN system can display a new sense of leadership and professionalism that would go a long way in justifying current interest in revitalizing the UN's humanitarian stewardship. Alternatively, the current unfocused approach to problems difficult but not beyond resolution can solidify judgments that the UN is, too often, hopelessly inept in assisting those victimized by civil war and internal conflict. The question is, will the UN demonstrate new strength and coherence or will the weaknesses of the UN system itself continue to hobble relief and rehabilitation efforts?

A famine-at-the-door mentality by humanitarian agencies operating in Ethiopia and Eritrea is no longer appropriate; nor is a heavy dependence on expatriate implementors of assistance. To say that famine is no longer inevitable does not mean that substantial emergency assistance is no longer required; it is. A serious food shortage exists that must be met with external aid. There are literally several million vulnerable people absolutely dependent on relief assistance—9.6 million in Ethiopia by official estimates, and another 2.3 million in Eritrea. And to say that the role of relief agencies has changed does not mean they have no role; they do. Their role will be critical in assuring an equitable distribution of relief as various groups struggle for rights and privileges in the new environment.

But a healthy transition is not assisted by relief agencies—in particular those of the United Nations and some church-affiliated local groups—if they fail to take steps now possible that would diminish the number of people dependent upon a relief pipeline. It would be dangerous for relief groups to hold on to a role and to programs no longer required or for governments desperate for resources to exaggerate need.

Will the UN demonstrate new strength and coherence or will the weaknesses of the UN system itself continue to hobble relief and rehabilitation efforts?

The transition cannot be too abrupt; options and capacities must be maintained. The experiments in nation building could fail. Drought remains a formidable threat. But famine in Ethiopia and Eritrea is, as elsewhere, a political/economic phenomenon. Altered dynamics there now allow the factors to be addressed that have fueled famine; thus, the emphasis of bilateral donors and international assistance agencies rightfully should be on facilitating the emergence of a democratic system that nourishes economic revitalization and growth.

The people's demonstrated self-reliance should be encouraged, not ignored. Humanitarian agencies can now "indigenize" their programs in a less hostile environment; there is less need for the larger relief agencies to be somewhat alien, self-contained entities. Ultimately, the demoralizing dependency of Ethiopians upon relief must be lowered and the dignity of the proud people of this ancient land respected.

Several relief and development agencies have begun a shift from emergency to "regular" food aid programs with more emphasis on food for work and more selective targeting of relief. Save the Children Federation (UK) has phased out of food aid programming. Catholic Relief Services and CARE, major players in Ethiopia for years, are reviewing plans for significant program shifts. A reconstituted Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (the RRC) envisions a two year phase-down of emergency food aid programs in an attempt to minimize dependency.

But some—donors and NGOs, the Ethiopian and Eritrean relief agencies, the UN system, and U.S. farmers and their congressional representatives, among others—have vested interests in continuing high level flows of emergency food aid. Such impulses can easily overwhelm the capacity of local farmers to achieve local self-reliance and have to be resisted. A priority of World Bank lending and that of bilateral donors must be supporting radical policy reforms in the agricultural sector that will enhance food security. The World Food Program needs to shift focus to using food to support rehabilitation efforts, the FAO to increased production techniques and marketing capacity.

The task is ultimately strengthening capacity at the household level to withstand the impact of periodic drought and economic jolts as the transitions take root. Herein lies the key to recovery and development. This is an enormous task and one that will require considerable wisdom and insight, as well as external resources. It is to this end that the international humanitarian community should now rightfully turn its sights.

The United States in the Horn

Due to historic factors and the bold role played by the U.S. State Department during the May London peace talks and the July national conference period, the United States is the pivotal external player in anchoring the democratic approaches to nation building that are central to breaking the famine cycle in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Ethiopia, in turn, is pivotal to democratization across Africa as well as to progress in addressing the series of human emergencies across the Horn. But Africa is not a foreign policy priority in Washington, and a historic opportunity to do much good at minimal cost is in danger of being squandered.

On the world map today, there is not a more compelling illustration of the humanitarian gains to be realized from the coming of a new order than in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Not only is Mengistu gone and the war over, but this achievement was realized with minimal violence and mayhem, given the decades of war that preceded the events of May. There was no battle for Addis, no wanton destruction in Asmara by the departing army of Mengistu, no protracted urban warfare. The chilling scenario of seeing the bloodshed of Mogadishu or Monrovia repeated was avoided.

There is now at least the prospect of a democratic system taking root in Ethiopia and nation building replacing a decades-long war in Eritrea. But the bold leadership exhibited by the U.S. government during the spring has been replaced by a joint failure of Congress and the Administration to move forward on the opportunity presented. After an investment of several billion dollars in emergency relief and a decade and a half preoccupation with the evils of Mengistu, the United States finds itself delinquent in delivering critical financial assistance (at levels far below annual relief expenditures) to shore up the democratization of Ethiopia or the stabilization of Eritrea.

Last year's failure by Congress to enact a foreign assistance authorization bill leaves Ethiopia (and thus Eritrea) stranded under Brooke Amendment sanctions.[8] The particulars of the Brooke Amendment being imposed against Ethiopia are murky, but stem from an alleged late 1970s default by the Mengistu government on payment for a small shipment of U.S. military equipment (that was in the aid pipeline before the fall of Haile Selassie). The Ethiopian position has long been that the equipment in question was never received but, instead, diverted to Somalia by the Pentagon at the time of the Ogaden war. The United States has offered scant documentation of the actual delivery of the arms, but nonetheless imposed Brooke sanctions (as well as other prohibitions barring anything other than emergency humanitarian assistance). There being no prospect of development assistance in any case during the Mengistu era, such sanctions were not a serious impediment to U.S. policy goals in the Horn in the 1980s.

But today Mengistu is gone, the particulars of the arms deal are irrelevant, a dramatic opportunity for facilitating change presents itself, and the United States government is on hold. The Congress, seldom responsible on African issues, has failed to approve a waiver of Brooke sanctions. The Administration, despite the superior performance of its senior officials during the crucial days of last May, has not mustered the arguments for presidential action to override Brooke.

Nor is the United States compensating for this failure with vigorous U.S. diplomatic leadership to rally other donors, most importantly the World Bank and Japan, to fill the breach. Ethiopia and Eritrea require several billion dollars in external financing for critical needs. The United States of course does not have several billion dollars available in its foreign aid accounts, but does have several hundred million and is in a position to encourage considerably more than that from other donors. But serious efforts on the part of the United States to enlarge the size of the current World Bank package or to speed up its delivery or to encourage the Japanese or others to come forward, or the taking of other appropriate steps, are not discernable.

If economic stagnation deteriorates into a free-fall, there is a significant prospect of urban instability in Ethiopia. And without significant—and immediate—outside assistance, there is no prospect of economic revitalization to preclude further deterioration. In turn, there is little likelihood of such assistance without U.S. leadership.

The World Bank is currently implementing a multi-year assistance program for Ethiopia, and the European Economic Community has provided some commodity import funds to keep minimal petroleum supplies flowing, but both efforts are modest in relation to the enormous needs. The months pass with Ethiopians, Eritreans and the international community waiting to see what, if anything, Washington intends.

The Agency for International Development has sent teams to Addis and Asmara to survey what can and should be done most immediately to assist the transitions, but AID itself can make no commitments pending the resolution of the sanctions question. Current indications are that if the Administration waits for the Congress to address the issue, it could be well into calendar 1992 before the first aid is committed.

The United States cannot singlehandedly deliver democratic transitions in Ethiopia or Eritrea. But we have considerable leverage. And during this period of maximum opportunity—and danger—is the time to apply that leverage. While the effort to remove the barriers to U.S. assistance would be minor, the consequence of failing to do so could well be damning to the most promising opportunity yet known in the troubled lands of the Horn.

Notes

1. See "Ethiopia, Eritrea and Democracy: Significant Opportunities Amidst a Fragile Transition," by Stephen Morrison and Jeffrey Clark, published by the National Endowment for Democracy, Washington D.C., October 1991.
2. See "Horn of Africa Nations to Meet on Famine Aid," by Paul Lewis in *The New York Times*, November 3, 1991.
3. The UNHCR, WFP, UNDP, UNDRO, FAO and UNICEF.
4. Recent studies have candidly appraised overall UN humanitarian operations and established solid options for consolidation of capacity and strengthening of mandates. See in particular *Responding to Emergencies: The Role of the UN in Emergencies and Ad Hoc Operation* by Krister Eduards, Gunmar Rosen, and Robert Rossborough, commissioned by the Nordic project (Report No. 14:1990), released October 1990. Action on various recommendations in the studies will depend upon the manifestation of political will and determination at UN headquarters and the dominant view of the United Nations in the post-Cold War era.
5. Kurt Jansson served as the first special UN coordinator from 1984 to early 1986. He was succeeded by Michael Priestly, now serving as the UN's overall coordinator for Horn of Africa disaster situations. For Jansson's first-hand account of the massive 1984/85 relief operations, see *Ethiopian Famine* (co-authored by Michael Harris and Angela Penrose).
6. The prototype of the UN humanitarian operations coordination unit has been temporarily established under the direction of Michael Priestly, the former special coordinator in Ethiopia. Priestly's office is attempting to bring coherence to the relief operations of the UN in the Horn. If permanently funded and if placed under the command of the undersecretary general for humanitarian affairs, Priestly's office has considerable potential. Should basic reforms be delayed and the office denied adequate funding, then the impact will be limited.
7. See "U.S. Increases Aid to Somalia after UN Balks," by Jane Perlez in *The New York Times*, December 15, 1991. Administration witnesses, however, previously stated in a congressional hearing that "nothing can be done in Somalia." The U.S. shares some delinquency on the Somali front.
8. The Brooke Amendment to the foreign assistance authorization legislation prohibits military, economic, or development assistance to any country in default on a U.S. government loan.

World Refugee Statistics

Refugee statistics almost invariably tell vivid stories of persecution and human rights abuse. They also embody more ambiguous patterns of political upheaval, transition, and flux. As such, government tallies cannot always be trusted to give full and unbiased accounts of refugee movements. One country's asylum seeker is another's illegal immigrant. Today's displaced person may be tomorrow's refugee. The call is sometimes a matter of law and policy, but just as frequently it is a matter of judgment.

The statistics below represent the best judgments of the U.S. Committee for Refugees as to the number of uprooted people worldwide in three general categories: refugees and asylum seekers, refugee-like populations, and internally displaced persons. We arrive at these figures after careful scrutiny of every reliable source available—official and unofficial—including our own first-hand documentation. In the end, some numbers prove very solid and others are little more than educated guesses.

Table 1 reflects the number of "refugees and asylum seekers in need of protection and assistance." Quite often, these are populations designated as refugees by host governments and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Some, primarily in Europe and North America, have entered into asylum proceedings. But others, while lacking any official recognition of their refugee claim, appear in our judgment to warrant aid and protection based on the ill treatment they have suffered at the hands of their own government or fear if returned, and on the precarious nature of their asylum. One example of this latter group is the 70,000 Burmese students and ethnic minorities in Thailand. Only a small handful are recognized by UNHCR as "persons of concern," and none by the Thai government itself. But in our view, they are refugees and in need of temporary protection and relief.

Table 2 identifies "selected populations in refugee-like situations." Populations on this list have not been recognized by host governments or UNHCR as refugees or asylum seekers, although some have been granted temporary refuge or allowed to remain on humanitarian grounds. Others remain undocumented. Persons fleeing the civil war in Yugoslavia who reached Germany or other West European countries, for example, were entered into asylum procedures and thus appear on Table 1; those fleeing identical circumstances who only got as far as Hungary or Austria usually were given temporary protection but not permitted to apply individually for refugee status protection. We have placed the more than 160,000 Burmese "illegal immigrants" in Thailand in Table 2. Information on this population is fragmentary, and their reasons for entering Thailand may vary widely. But given the pervasive violence and abuse in Burma and the constant threat of deportation from Thailand, USCR has chosen to call their situation "refugee-like."

Table 3 lists "significant populations of internally displaced civilians," ranging from 4.7 million Sudanese to 7,000 Hondurans. The key factor USCR looks for in this context is internal displacement as a result of human conflict or of persecutory government policies such as forced relocation. The 2 million Mozambicans who are internally displaced fled their homes for the same reasons as the nearly 1.5 million Mozambican refugees in neighboring countries. They simply did not cross an international border. In the case of the former Soviet Union, USCR cites a figure of 900,000 internally displaced. As the many emerging republics begin to resolve issues of sovereignty and citizenship, some of these populations will find a home. Others could become recognized as refugees.

In collecting data for the statistics and country reports, in addition to our own field research and documentation, USCR relies on a variety of sources, including UNHCR, the U.S. Department of State, the media, private voluntary organizations, and human rights groups. (see p. 111.) Instances where key sources differ significantly are indicated in the statistical tables with an asterisk (*). All numbers have been rounded. For further detail or clarification of numbers in the tables, see the country reports.

TABLE 1
REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN NEED OF PROTECTION AND/OR ASSISTANCE

(as of December 31, 1991)

Refugees and asylum seekers who require international protection and/or assistance are unable or unwilling to repatriate due to fear of persecution and violence in their homelands. This table does not include refugees permanently settled in other countries. In some cases, refugees listed in Table 1 may no longer require assistance, but still need international protection. Starting in 1989, USCR began to include asylum seekers in Table 1, recognizing the increasing numbers of countries worldwide that have instituted asylum adjudication procedures and the need for protection and assistance while their claims are pending. In this table, totals for asylum seekers (primarily in Europe and North America) are for those persons who applied for asylum during the past year. Hundreds of thousands of other cases are pending from previous years.

Asylum Country	Subtotal by Source Country	Total
AFRICA		
Algeria		**204,000***
W. Sahara	165,000*	
Mali	35,000	
Others	4,000	
Angola		**10,400**
Zaire	10,300	
S. Africa	100	
Benin		**15,100**
Togo	15,000	
Chad	100	
Botswana		**1,490**
S. Africa	1,000	
Angola	200	
Others	200	
Burkina Faso		**400**
Chad	200	
Others	200	
Burundi		**107,000***
Rwanda	80,600*	
Zaire	25,900	
Somalia	100	
Others	400	
Cameroon		**6,900**
Chad	6,500	
Others	400	
Central African Rep.		**9,000**
Sudan	8,000	
Chad	1,000	
Congo		**3,400**
Chad	2,300	
Zaire	400	
CAR	300	
Others	400	
Côte d'Ivoire		**240,400**
Liberia	240,000	
Others	400	
Djibouti		**120,000**
Somalia	105,000	
Ethiopia	15,000[1]	
Egypt		**7,750**
Palestinians	5,500	
Somalia	1,300	
Ethiopia	600	
Others	350	
Ethiopia		**534,000***
Somalia	519,000*	
Sudan	15,000	
Gabon		**800**
Gambia		**1,500**
Senegal	1,000	
Liberia	500	
Ghana		**6,150[2]**
Liberia	6,000	
Others	150	
Guinea		**566,000***
Liberia	397,000*	
Sierra Leone	169,000*	
Guinea Bissau		**4,600**
Senegal	4,600	
Kenya		**107,150**
Somalia	92,200	
Ethiopia	11,800	
Rwanda	2,000	
Uganda	700	
Others	450	
Lesotho		**300**
S. Africa	300	
Liberia		**12,000**
Sierra Leone	12,000	
Malawi		**950,000**
Mozambique	950,000	
Mali		**13,500**
Mauritania	13,000	
Niger	500	
Mauritania		**40,000**
Senegal	22,000	
Mali	18,000	
Morocco		**800**
Mozambique		**500**
Namibia		**30,200**
Angola	30,000	
Others	200	
Niger		**1,400**
Chad	1,400	
Nigeria		**4,600**
Chad	3,300	
Liberia	1,000	
Others	300	
Rwanda		**32,500**
Burundi	32,500	
Senegal		**53,100**
Mauritania	53,000	
Others	100	
Sierra Leone		**17,200**
Liberia	17,200	

Somalia		**35,000**
Ethiopia	35,000	
South Africa		**201,000***
Mozambique	200,000*	
Lesotho	1,000	
Sudan		**717,200***
Ethiopia/ Eritrea	690,000[3]*	
Chad	20,000*	
Zaire	4,500	
Uganda	2,700	
Swaziland		**47,200***
Mozambique	39,500*	
S. Africa	7,700	
Tanzania		**251,100**
Burundi	131,000	
Mozambique	72,000	
Rwanda	22,300	
Zaire	16,000	
S. Africa	9,600	
Others	200	
Togo		**450**
Tunisia		**50**
Uganda		**165,450***
Rwanda	87,000*	
Sudan	75,500	
S. Africa	2,000	
Zaire	600	
Others	350	
Zaire		**482,300**
Angola	310,000	
Sudan	104,000	
Burundi	45,000	
Rwanda	12,000	
Uganda	10,000	
Others	1,300	
Zambia		**140,500**
Angola	103,000	
Mozambique	25,000	
Zaire	9,000	
S. Africa	2,000	
Uganda	1,500	
Zimbabwe		**198,500***
Mozambique	197,000*	
S. Africa	1,000	
Others	500	

TOTAL AFRICA 5,340,800

EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Australia		**23,000**
China		**14,200**
Burma	10,000	
Laos	4,200	
Hong Kong		**60,000**
Vietnam	60,000	
Indonesia		**18,700**
Vietnam	17,000	
Cambodia	1,700	
Japan		**900**
Vietnam	900	
Korea		**200**
Vietnam	200	
Macau		**100**
Vietnam	100	
Malaysia		**12,700**
Vietnam	12,500	
Indonesia	200	
Papua New Guinea		**6,700**
Indonesia	6,700	
Philippines		**18,000**
Vietnam	18,000	
Singapore		**150**
Vietnam	150	
Taiwan		**150**
Vietnam	150	
Thailand		**512,700**
Cambodia	370,000	
Laos	59,000	
Burma	70,000	
Vietnam	13,700	
Vietnam		**21,000**
Cambodia	21,000	

TOTAL EAST ASIA/ PACIFIC 688,500

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

Austria		**27,300**
Belgium		**15,200**
Canada		**30,500**
Czech and Slovak Federal Republic		**2,800**
Denmark		**4,600**
Finland		**2,100**
France		**46,800**
Germany		**256,100**
Greece		**2,700**
Hungary		**5,200**
Italy		**31,400**
Netherlands		**21,600**
Norway		**4,600**
Poland		**2,500**
Portugal		**200**
Romania		**500**
Spain		**8,100**
Sweden		**27,300**
Switzerland		**41,600**
Turkey		**31,500**
Iraq	29,500	
Iran	2,000	
United Kingdom		**44,700**
United States		**68,800**
Various	62,000	
Haitians/ Guantánamo	6,800	
Yugoslavia		**1,600**

TOTAL EUROPE/ NORTH AMERICA 677,700

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Argentina		**1,800**
Belize		**12,000**
El Salvador	8,500	
Guatemala	3,100	
Nicaragua	400	
Bolivia		**100**
Brazil		**200**
Colombia		**700**
Costa Rica		**24,300**
Nicaragua	20,000	
El Salvador	4,000	
Others	300	
Cuba		**1,100**
Ecuador		**4,200***
Colombia	4,000*	
Others	200	
El Salvador		**250**
French Guiana		**9,600**
Suriname	9,600	
Guatemala		**8,300**
Nicaragua	4,900	
El Salvador	3,400	
Honduras		**2,050**
El Salvador	1,700	
Guatemala	100	
Nicaragua	100	
Mexico		**48,500**
Guatemala	43,500	
El Salvador	4,000	
Others	1,000	
Nicaragua		**2,800**
El Salvador	2,600	
Others	200	
Panama		**1,300**
Peru		**600**
Cuba	400	
Others	200	
Uruguay		**100**
Venezuela		**1,700**
Cuba	1,000	
Chile	350	
Others	350	

TOTAL LATIN AMERICA/ CARIBBEAN 119,600

MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Bangladesh		**30,150**
Burma	30,000[4]	
Others	150	
Gaza Strip		**528,700**
Palestinians	528,700	
India		**402,600***
Sri Lanka	210,000	
China (Tibet)	100,000	
Bangladesh	65,000*	
Bhutan	15,000	
Afghanistan	9,800	
Burma	2,000	
Others	800	
Iran		**3,150,000***
Afghanistan	3,000,000	
Iraq	150,000*	
Iraq		**48,000**
Iran	48,000	
Jordan		**960,200**
Palestinians	960,200	
Lebanon		**314,200**
Palestinians	310,600	
Others	3,600	
Nepal		**24,000**
China (Tibet)	14,000	
Bhutan	10,000	
Pakistan		**3,594,000***
Afghanistan	3,591,000*	
Others	3,000	
Saudi Arabia		**34,000**
Iraq	34,000	
Syria		**293,900**
Palestinians	289,900	
Iraq	4,000	
West Bank		**430,100**
Palestinians	430,100	
Yemen		**11,100**

TOTAL MIDDLE EAST/ SOUTH ASIA 9,820,950

GRAND TOTAL 16,647,550

* Indicates sources vary significantly in the number reported.

1. Does not include 34,000 Ethiopian military and dependents who entered in 1991 but repatriated during the year.

2. Does not include 1,500–2,000 Togolese who entered in 1991 but repatriated during the year.

3. Does not include 51,000 Ethiopian military and dependents who entered in 1991 but whom UNHCR repatriated during the year.

4. By late March 1992, there were some 145,000 Burmese in Bangladesh.

TABLE 2
SELECTED POPULATIONS IN REFUGEE-LIKE SITUATIONS

(as of December 31, 1991)

Many people who may fear persecution or harm if returned to their home countries, and thus, who may be refugees, are not recognized by governments as refugees or asylum seekers. Some are given temporary refuge or allowed to remain on humanitarian grounds; others remain undocumented. Information on these groups is fragmentary, and estimates of their numbers often vary widely, especially those marked with an asterisk (*).

Host Country	Origin	Number
Jordan	Palestinians	740,000
Iran	Iraq	500,000*
Mexico	Central Americans	340,000*
Bangladesh	Pakistan (Biharis)	260,000
Guatemala	Central Americans	250,000*
United States	Salvadorans and others	200,000
Burundi	Rwanda	187,000
Thailand	Burma	160,000*
Uganda	Rwanda	120,000*
Egypt	Palestinians	100,000
Turkey	Iran	100,000
Kuwait	Palestinians	80,000
Costa Rica	Central Americans	80,000*
Honduras	Central Americans	50,000*
Hungary	Yugoslavia	45,000
Lebanon	Palestinians	40,000
Cameroon	Chad	35,000
Belize	Central Americans	28,000
El Salvador	Central Americans	20,000
Nicaragua	Central Americans	16,000
Pakistan	India (Kashmiris)	10,000
Greece	Albania	9,800
Austria	Yugoslavia	8,000
Lesotho	South Africa	4,000

TABLE 3

SELECTED LIST OF SIGNIFICANT POPULATIONS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED CIVILIANS

(as of December 31, 1991)

Table 3 identifies selected countries in which substantial numbers of people have been displaced within their homelands as a result of human conflict or forced relocations. Although they share many characteristics with refugees who cross international borders, they are generally not eligible for international refugee assistance. Because information on internal displacement is fragmentary, this table presents only reported estimates, and no total is provided. It is important to note that even this selected list includes 23 million people, and that the total number of internally displaced civilians is undoubtedly much higher.

Sudan	4,750,000	El Salvador	150,000–400,000
South Africa	4,100,000	Nicaragua	354,000
Afghanistan	2,000,000	Uganda	300,000
Mozambique	2,000,000	Cyprus	268,000
Philippines	1,000,000	Haiti	200,000
Ethiopia/Eritrea	1,000,000	Peru	200,000
Burma	500,000–1,000,000	Cambodia	180,000
Somalia	500,000–1,000,000	Colombia	150,000
USSR	900,000	Guatemala	150,000
Angola	827,000	Sierra Leone	145,000
Lebanon	750,000	Rwanda	100,000
Iraq	700,000	India	85,000
Sri Lanka	600,000	Turkey	30,000
Yugoslavia	557,000	Panama	10,000
Liberia	500,000	Honduras	7,000

TABLE 4

PRINCIPAL SOURCES OF THE WORLD'S REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

(as of December 31, 1991)

This chart is a retabulation of Table 1. It identifies countries that have generated the greatest numbers of the world's refugees. Counts may understate the total number of refugees from a given country, as asylum nations do not always specify countries of refugees' origin. This table does not include populations considered to be in refugee-like circumstances listed in Table 2, many of whom are also refugees. Also, it does not include populations who left their countries as refugees or in refugee-like circumstances, but who have been offered permanent resettlement and status in another country. Examples include 84,600 Vietnamese (68,350 of whom went to the United States) who left Vietnam via the Orderly Departure Program in 1991 (see Table 9), 207,500 Jews who departed the former Soviet Union for Israel and the United States, and 14,500 Ethiopian Jews who departed for Israel.

Afghanistan	6,600,800*	Zaire	66,700
Palestinians	2,525,000	Mauritania	66,000
Mozambique	1,483,500*	Bangladesh	65,000*
Ethiopia/Eritrea	752,400*	Laos	63,200
Somalia	717,600*	Mali	53,000
Liberia	661,700*	Iran	50,000
Angola	443,200	Guatemala	46,700
Cambodia	392,700	Chad	34,800
Iraq	217,500*	Senegal	27,600
Sri Lanka	210,000	Nicaragua	25,400
Burundi	208,500	Bhutan	25,000
Rwanda	203,900*	El Salvador	24,200
Sudan	202,500	South Africa	23,700
Sierra Leone	181,000*	Togo	15,000
Western Sahara	165,000*	Uganda	14,900
Vietnam	122,650	Suriname	9,600
Yugoslavia	120,000	Haiti	6,950
China (Tibet)	114,000	Indonesia	6,900
Burma	112,000†	Colombia	4,000*

* Indicates that sources vary significantly in number reported.
† See footnotes, Table 1, for changes in population in early 1992.

TABLE 5
SIGNIFICANT VOLUNTARY REPATRIATIONS—1991

These numbers reflect estimates of refugees who spontaneously returned to their homelands, as well as those people who participated in formal programs administered by UNHCR. Also included are some compelled by circumstances, but not forced by governments, to return.

To	From	Numbers
Afghanistan	Iran	62,600
Afghanistan	Pakistan	130,000
Angola	Zaire	15,000
Burundi	Tanzania	18,000
El Salvador	Central America	2,500
Ethiopia	Djibouti	2,400
Ethiopia	Somalia	320,000
Ethiopia/Eritrea	Sudan	10,000
Guatemala	Mexico	1,765
Indonesia	Papua New Guinea	360
Iran	Iraq	15,200
Iraq	Iran	1,300,000
Iraq	Saudi Arabia	1,300
Kuwait	Saudi Arabia/Others	400,000
Laos	China	300
Laos	Thailand	1,400
Liberia	West Africa	56,000
Nicaragua	Central America	15,000
Somalia	Ethiopia	100,000
South Africa	Southern Africa	7,400
Sudan	Ethiopia	270,000
Vietnam	Southeast Asia	10,200

TABLE 6
INVOLUNTARY RETURNS AND EXPULSIONS—1991

The UN Convention and Protocol prohibit the forced repatriation of refugees. However, many governments violate this, expelling bona fide refugees, potential asylum seekers, and others screened-out under questionable procedures. This is not a comprehensive list, and no total is given.

From	To	Numbers
Dominican Rep.	Haiti	10,000
Hong Kong	Vietnam	87
Italy	Albania	17,000
Kuwait	Jordan (Palestinians)[1]	60,000
Kuwait	Iraq	1,000
Mexico	Guatemala	35,000[2]
Nepal	China (Tibet)	3,600
Saudi Arabia[3]	Iraq	283
Saudi Arabia	Somalia	960[4]
South Africa	Mozambique	36,000
Tanzania	Burundi	6,000
Thailand	Burma	2,200
Thailand	Laos	288
Turkey	Iraq	448,000
United States	Haiti	1,872
Zimbabwe	Mozambique	2,000

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[1] Palestinians coerced to leave Kuwait. Another 180,000 who fled after the Iraqi invasion were not permitted to return to Kuwait.

[2] Includes other Central Americans deported to Guatemala.

[3] An estimated 750,000 Yemenis who were expelled from Saudi Arabia in retaliation for its stance in the Gulf War were not considered refugees.

[4] These Somalis were expelled from Saudi Arabia to neighboring countries.

TABLE 7
REFUGEES IN RELATION TO LOCAL POPULATION AND PER CAPITA GNP OF THE ASYLUM COUNTRY
1991

COUNTRY	Ratio of Refugee to Non-Refugee Population	Number of Refugees	Population (in millions)	GNP Per Capita
Gaza Strip †	1/1	528,700	0.6	N/A
West Bank †	1/3	430,100	1.1	N/A
Djibouti	1/3	120,000	0.4	N/A
Jordan	1/4	960,200	3.4	$ 1,730
French Guiana †	1/10	9,600	0.1	N/A
Malawi	1/10	950,000	9.4	180
Lebanon	1/11	314,200	3.4	N/A
Guinea	1/13	566,000	7.5	430
Belize	1/17	12,000	0.2	1,600
Swaziland	1/17	47,200	0.8	900
Iran	1/24	3,150,000	58.6	N/A
Pakistan	1/33	3,594,000	117.5	370
Sudan	1/36	717,200	25.9	420
Syria	1/44	293,900	12.8	1,020
Namibia	1/50	30,200	1.5	N/A
Zimbabwe	1/50	198,500	10.0	640
Côte d'Ivoire	1/52	240,400	12.5	790
Mauritania	1/53	40,900	2.1	490
Burundi	1/54	107,000	5.8	220
Zambia	1/60	140,500	8.4	390
Zaire	1/78	482,300	37.8	260
Hong Kong †	1/98	60,000	5.9	10,320
Ethiopia	1/100	534,000	53.2	120
Thailand	1/115	512,700	58.8	1,170

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† Territories, not sovereign countries.

TABLE 8
1991 CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE AID AGENCIES
Top 20 Countries
(Ranked by contribution per capita)

Country	Contribution Per Capita	Population (in millions)	Contribution+ (in millions)	GNP Per Capita
Norway	$11.28	4.3	$ 48.51	$21,850
Sweden	10.78	8.6	92.72	$21,710
Finland	8.27	5.0	41.34	$22,060
Denmark	7.72	5.1	39.38	$20,510
Switzerland	4.71	6.8	31.99	$30,270
Luxembourg	3.38	0.4	1.35	$24,860
Netherlands	2.71	15.0	40.59	$16,010
Canada	1.59	26.8	42.50	$19,020
Japan	1.19	123.8	146.73	$23,730
United States	1.10	252.8	277.73	$21,100
Kuwait	1.08	1.4	1.52	N/A
United Kingdom	1.03	57.5	59.51	$14,750
Germany	0.92	79.5	73.47	$16,200
Belgium	0.80	9.9	7.90	$16,390
Australia	0.66	17.5	11.56	$14,440
Austria	0.64	7.7	4.95	$17,360
Italy	0.57	57.7	33.07	$15,150
France	0.31	56.7	17.54	$17,830
Spain	0.22	39.0	8.55	$ 9,150
New Zealand	0.20	3.5	0.70	$11,800

+ See note, page 36, Table 10.

TABLE 9
REFUGEES RESETTLED AND PERSONS GRANTED ASYLUM IN RELATION TO LOCAL POPULATION

(In order of refugees-to-population ratio)

Resettlement Country	1975–1990 Cumulative	1990 Only	Local Population	Ratio Refugees/ Population
Sweden	121,154	12,839	8.6	1/71
Canada	325,045	37,820	26.8	1/82
Australia	183,104	10,281	17.5	1/96
United States	1,478,184	122,326	252.8	1/171
Denmark	29,480	747	5.1	1/173
Norway*	21,708	3,767	4.3	1/198
New Zealand	11,428	440	3.5	1/306
France	200,030	13,073	56.7	1/283
Switzerland	22,295	808	6.8	1/305
Austria	24,249	3,678	7.7	1/318
Netherlands	21,880	1,709	15.0	1/686
Germany †	91,478	6,518	79.5	1/869
Spain	38,713	527	39.0	1/1,007
United Kingdom*	14,897	1,100	57.5	1/3,860

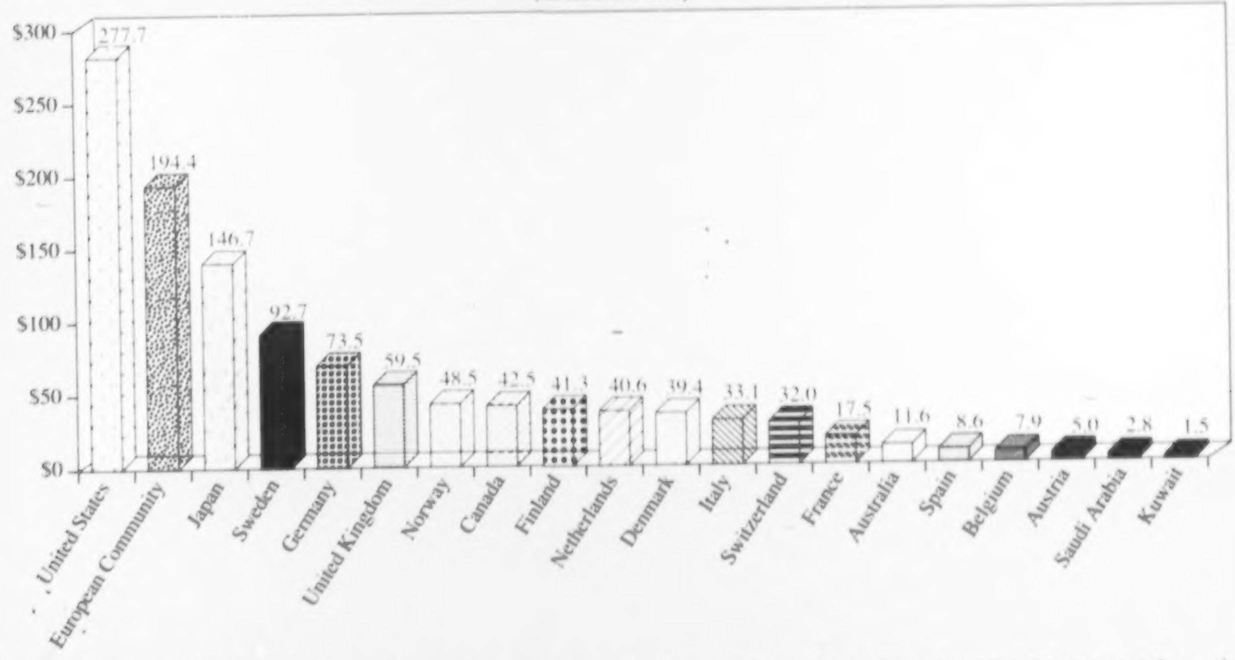
NOTE ON TABLE 9: The primary source for numbers of refugees resettled or granted asylum was the U.S. State Department. Countries that have established resettlement programs generally provide particularly precise data, but data were not available for all countries for all years.

* Denotes that statistics were unavailable for 1975–1981.

† Does not include 222,000 ethnic Germans from the Soviet Union, Poland, and Romania.

TABLE 10
1991 CONTRIBUTIONS TO SELECTED INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE AID AGENCIES

Top 20 Countries
(In millions of $)



NOTE ON TABLE 8 AND GRAPH: Table 8 and this graph report the amounts of financial assistance provided to international agencies by countries. The relative significance of contributions should be considered not only in terms of absolute size, but also in relation to population and gross national product. Included are estimated 1991 contributions to UNHCR, IOM, and UNRWA.

Each country's contributions to the European Community are not reflected. Bilateral aid, some forms of aid that are not exclusively or even primarily designated for refugees, and aid through such agencies as the World Bank, which may benefit refugees, are also not reflected.

AFRICA

Sahrawi refugees collect water near Tindouf refugee camp in the Algerian desert. A proposed referendum on the future of Western Sahara has yet to take place. Teresa Smith de Cherif

Algeria

Once again, the hopes of 165,000 Sahrawi refugees living in Algeria for returning to their homeland, Western Sahara, were thwarted in 1991.

Sahrawi refugees began entering Algeria after Spain relinquished its colonial rule over the former Spanish Sahara in 1975. Morocco occupied Western Sahara, moved in more than 300,000 Moroccan settlers, and stationed some 160,000 troops there. An armed Sahrawi group that seeks independence for Western Sahara, the Sahrawi Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro, known as the Polisario, controls only a small strip of land along the Sahrawi/Algerian border.

The Sahrawi refugees live in the barren Tindouf area of southwestern Algeria. Conditions in the camps are harsh, and the refugees depend primarily on outside assistance from the Algerian government, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and various European groups. The refugees supplement their rations through chicken breeding and vegetable growing projects.

According to some sources, the number of Sahrawi refugees living in the camps may be well below—perhaps half—the official figure of 165,000. These sources say that some 30,000 of the Tindouf camp's residents may in fact be nationals of other countries, particularly Mali and Mauritania.

The year began with promise for the refugees. In April, the UN Security Council voted unanimously to establish the UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara, a UN group charged with bringing about a vote by Sahrawis on whether Western Sahara should become independent or integrate with Morocco.

Both Morocco and the Polisario agreed to the $234 million UN plan for implementation of the referendum. The plan proposed: the deployment of a 1,700 strong UN peace-keeping force, plus another 1,000 UN personnel to implement the referendum; a cease-fire to begin in September 1991; a reduction in the number of Moroccan troops in Western Sahara from 160,000 to 65,000; the repatriation of Sahrawi refugees under UNHCR supervision; and the referendum itself, scheduled for January 1992.

But Morocco has consistently derailed the UN plan. First, the Moroccan authorities temporarily refused to allow the UN's special envoy into Western Sahara. Later, they refused entry to the first contingent of peace-keeping forces and their equipment (by December 1991, only 450 UN troops were in place). Then, shortly before the official cease-fire was scheduled to begin, Morocco mounted an offensive against the Polisario. Also, after agreeing to an electoral role based on a 1974 Spanish census in Western Sahara, Morocco presented the UN a list of an additional 120,000 people it claimed were also Sahrawi citizens who should be allowed to vote. According to the Polisario, in September, Morocco began moving some 40,000 people from Morocco into Western Sahara (reputedly pro-Moroccan Sahrawis who have been living in Morocco since 1975 and who are likely to vote for union with Morocco).

At the end of 1991, Morocco, the Polisario, and the UN were still arguing over who would be eligible to vote, and there appeared to be little likelihood that a referendum would take place in early 1992.

In addition to the Sahrawi refugees, Algeria hosts some 35,000 ethnic Tuareg Malian refugees. They are concentrated mainly around Tamanrasset and Adrar. There are also some 4,000 other refugees of various nationalities, mainly Palestinians and Nigeriens, in Algeria.

Angola

On May 31, 1991, Angolan President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos and Jonas Savimbi, President of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), formally signed a Portuguese-mediated peace settlement. The agreement consists of a cease-fire, the creation of a new, integrated national army, and a multiparty electoral transition to a new democratic order by late 1992. It also establishes the United Nations Angola Verification Mission and commits the United States, the Soviet Union, and Portugal to guarantee the peace process by including representatives in a Joint Political-Military Commission composed of the government and UNITA.

These developments raise a reasonable hope that Angola's warring parties will turn away from a bloody 15-year conflict that has, according to an August 1991 USCR Issue Paper, *The Long Road Home: Angola's Post-War Inheritance*, left 200,000 to 300,000 dead and uprooted hundreds of thousands of Angolans. The indiscriminate use of land mines has resulted in a population of 40,000 to 50,000 amputees.

During the cease-fire, Angolans, with international assistance, will begin to address their urgent humanitarian needs more seriously than has been possible, to manage the eventual return of hundreds of thousands of displaced and refugees, and to rebuild Angola's devastated rural society. According to the U.S. State Department, an estimated 827,000 Angolans are internally displaced and in need of international assistance.

Some sources say that among those internally displaced by the war are some persons who either fled to or were forcibly relocated to relatively secure, but agriculturally unpromising, UNITA-controlled territory in southeastern Angola. The World Bank estimates that another 600,000 persons moved into government-controlled cities and towns. Luanda alone swelled from 450,000 in 1975 to 1.3 million in 1990.

Estimates of Angolan refugees include: over 103,000 in Zambia, most of whom are likely pro-UNITA; no fewer than 30,000 in northern Namibia; and some 310,000 in Zaire.

A UNHCR repatriation program carried out in 1989-90 succeeded in repatriating only 6,213 Angolans from Zaire before UNHCR suspended it due to security problems, suspicions between the Angolan and Zairean governments, and insufficient funds. In 1991, another 15,000 Angolans repatriated from Zaire, primarily due to insecurity in that country arising from domestic opposition to the government.

In the context of the upcoming national electoral contest in late 1992, the return of dislocated populations could easily become a highly contentious issue between UNITA and the government.

Burundi

Burundi, one of Africa's smallest countries, hosts a substantial but relatively settled refugee population. That population includes an estimated 80,600 ethnic Tutsi Rwandese refugees who arrived in the 1960s and early 1970s. The Tutsi-dominated government of Burundi estimates that another 187,000 unassisted Rwandese refugees live in Burundi. They are fully integrated economically and socially, but until 1991 were not eligible for Burundian citizenship. However, at a February meeting with officials from the Rwandese government, UNHCR, and the OAU, leaders of countries hosting Rwandese refugees, including Burundi, pledged (as part of a regional solution) to offer citizenship to Rwandese refugees who choose not to repatriate. This has not yet occurred. Burundi also hosts 25,900 Zairean refugees, of whom only 2,530 are assisted by UNHCR, and 500 refugees of other nationalities.

Large numbers of ethnic Hutu Burundian refugees live in neighboring countries, mostly in stable situations. Reportedly, some 18,000 Burundians repatriated from Tanzania during 1991. An estimated 6,000 other Burundians living in Tanzania, reportedly without refugee status, were said to have been forcibly repatriated to Burundi in July.

In late November, more than 46,000 Burundian refugees fled to Zaire and Rwanda. Their flight followed confrontations in Bujumbura, the Burundian capital, and other areas between the Burundian military, which is dominated by ethnic Tutsis, and armed insurgents who oppose the government.

Congo

September 1991 disturbances in neighboring Zaire led to the evacuation of thousands of foreign nationals residing there, many of whom transited through Congo. A small number of Zaireans also crossed into Congo, but there is no indication whether they were seeking asylum.

The events in Zaire produced strains in Congo that resulted in the Congolese authorities forcibly deporting some 10,000 Zaireans in November. The government declared the Zaireans, many of whom had lived in Congo for years, to be economic migrants (a large percentage of the residents of the Congolese capital, Brazzaville, are in fact Zaireans). It is not clear whether any of the Zaireans who entered Congo following the disturbances in their homeland were among those deported.

Côte d'Ivoire

When Liberian refugees first fled to Côte d'Ivoire beginning in late December 1989, local people in villages and towns opened their homes to them, shared their food supplies, and often gave them land to farm. As a result, Liberian refugees did not wind up living in refugee camps, but "cohabitating" (as it is referred to in the region) with the local people. But by 1991, relations between locals and the 240,000 Liberian refugees had become strained, and the Ivorian government began taking steps to limit the influx.

The problems are least noticeable in the villages nearest the border with Liberia, where many of the refugees and locals are not only of the same ethnic groups, but are often related.

Farther from the border, the level of kinship between locals and refugees decreases, and tensions increase. The issue of refugees paying rent for housing and use of farmland becomes thorny. Refugees complain that when locals hire them to cut wood or work in their fields, they

Angolan returnees: In May 1991, the Angolan government and UNITA rebels signed a peace agreement that could pave the way for the repatriation of more than 340,000 Angolan refugees.
USCR/H. Ruiz

don't pay as promised. Locals, on the other hand, complain that refugees take their hospitality for granted and don't share willingly.

In Danane, the town with the highest refugee concentration, the problems and ensuing tensions reach a peak. Many of the refugees in Danane are of urban background. They generally do not have direct links with the local people, and are not cohabitating with them. Local people and government officials say that since the refugees arrived, crime, violence, and prostitution have increased.

Between May and September, food distribution was one of the refugees' main concerns. They were receiving only half rations of rice, at least in part because the Ivorian government saw that refugees were selling rice and said that meant they were getting more than they needed (refugees say they have to sell some rice in order to buy medicines and other necessary goods).

Education has been another problem. For more than eighteen months after refugees began arriving in Côte d'Ivoire, the government did not allow any education programs for refugee children. In late 1991, the government reversed that policy. Education programs are due to begin in 1992.

Access to health care and medicines, which are supposed to be available without cost to both locals and refugees, is another source of friction. Many refugees say they do not receive the medical attention they need.

In July, following a new wave of fighting in Grand Gedeh County, Liberia, more than 10,000 Liberian refugees, mostly Krahns, entered the Tai region of Côte d'Ivoire. The response of UNHCR, the local authorities, and relief groups to the new influx was wholly inadequate, apparently due largely to their lack of cooperation and coordination. The U.S. Committee for Refugees visited Côte d'Ivoire in August 1991. At that time, the influx had been underway for more than a month, but no food had been distributed to the new arrivals (the first food distribution was scheduled to take place within a few days of USCR's visit).

In a statement sent to the concerned authorities and the media on August 22, USCR said, "The medical situation is particularly alarming. A number of refugees told USCR that they were ill or had sick relatives, but had not received adequate medical care. One woman . . . said three of her children had died because of diarrhea since their arrival."

Beginning in May, apparently to discourage refugee arrivals, the Ivorian government stopped granting automatic refugee status to newly arrived Liberians (an exception was made in the case of the 10,000 arrivals from Grand Gedeh). Subsequently, the Ivorian government insitituted a procedure for individually determining the refugee status of Liberians who had arrived after May. Only 50.4 percent of those who applied for refugee status between May and December were approved. There have been no reports of those denied refugee status being forced to leave Côte d'Ivoire, but they are not eligible to receive assistance.

A number of refugees, particularly those living nearest the border, regularly go back to Liberia to work on their farms. But until they are more confident about the security situation in Liberia, they are unlikely to return permanently.

Djibouti

In 1978, one year after it gained independence, Djibouti became host to its first refugees, ethnic Somali Ethiopians fleeing war between Djibouti's two large and turbulent neighbors, Ethiopia and Somalia. Since then, Djibouti, always concerned about the potential for being drawn into conflicts in or between Ethiopia and Somalia, has reluctantly accepted various waves of refugees. Its record of dealing with refugees has been uneven. While mostly allowing refugees to enter and stay, and facilitating international assistance to them, the Djibouti government has also forcibly repatriated some refugees and harassed others.

During 1991, the fall of both the Ethiopian and Somali regimes led to increased refugee flows into Djibouti. In early 1991, there were some 61,000 Somali refugees in Djibouti. By year's end, that figure had grown to 105,000. Someof the new Somali refugees came directly from northern Somalia, where the Somali National Movement rebel group, dominated particularly by members of the Issak clan, gained full control in early 1991 and subsequently declared an independent republic. Some members of other clans, particularly Gadabursis and Issas, fled to Djibouti. Other Somali refugees entered Djibouti from Ethiopia, where conditions in refugee camps deteriorated significantly due mainly to insecurity in northeastern Ethiopia following a change in government (see Ethiopia).

Somalis are refused official refugee status in Djibouti, but are allowed to remain, particularly because most are members of the Issa clan (Issas are the dominant group in Djibouti; Afars are Djibouti's other main ethnic group). Most of the Somali refugees live with relatives in the capital, Djibouti ville, but some live in one of three camps that UNHCR established for them near the Somali border. In November, the UN reported an alarming 41 percent malnutrition rate among refugees in the camps.

An estimated 49,000 Ethiopian refugees fled to Djibouti following the May overthrow of the Mengistu regime in Addis Ababa and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) takeover of all of Eritrea. Some 39,000 of these were Ethiopian military officers, their relatives, and other civilians who fled the port of Assab when the EPLF captured it. The influx severely taxed the already overstretched resources of the Djibouti government, which nevertheless spent more than $1.5 million on emergency supplies for the Ethiopians. Some 34,000 of the group subsequently repatriated to Ethiopia, while 5,000 opted to remain in Djibouti. Djibouti authorities, anxious that the Ethiopians—especially the soldiers—leave, reportedly did not fully provide the Ethiopians an opportunity to apply for asylum.

The other 10,000 Ethiopian refugees who entered Djibouti were members of the Afar ethnic group, most of whom also fled after the EPLF takeover in Eritrea. They are living in villages in northwestern Djibouti. In late 1991, UNHCR was planning to transfer the Afars to a reception center at Aoar Aoussa.

In July, clashes between ethnic Oromos and Issas in the Ethiopian town of Dire Dawa reverberated in Djibouti, where a number of Oromo Ethiopian refugees had been living for many years. Attacks on Oromos by Issa mobs in Djibouti (Oromo groups claim that the Djibouti authorities condoned the violence) left several Oromo refugees dead. Hundreds of others sought protection in the UNHCR and Ethiopian embassy compounds. Many of them were arrested and jailed by the Djibouti authorities. On July 17, USCR, which had visited Djibouti in May, wrote to the Djibouti embassy in Washington, "It is tragic to think that individuals who fled persecution in their own country would be attacked and killed or imprisoned in the country where they sought refuge." In the weeks following the disturbances, most of the Oromos repatriated to Ethiopia.

With 120,000 refugees remaining in Djibouti (105,000 Somalis; 10,000 Afar Ethiopians; 5,000 other Ethiopians), the ratio of refugees to local people in Djibouti (which has a total population of some 400,000) is now more than 1 to 3, the highest in the world. The turbulent events in the Horn of Africa in 1991, particularly those in Ethiopia, also affected domestic politics in Djibouti. In late 1991, Djibouti was on the brink of civil war. Afar rebels belonging to the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD), attacked and captured several towns in northern Djibouti. FRUD has been active for several years, seeking a greater share of power in Djibouti. But, following the EPLF victory in Eritrea, eastern parts of which are populated by Afars, there has been a growing movement for an independent Afar state covering parts of what are now Djibouti, Eritrea, and Ethiopia.

Egypt

Relations between the Palestinian community living in Egypt and the Egyptian government grew increasingly strained as a result of the Gulf War. Not only did Palestinian and Egyptian leadership back opposing sides in the war, but the return of hundreds of thousands of Egyptian expatriate workers brought them into direct competition for jobs with Palestinian residents. More than a million and a half Egyptians worked in Iraq prior to the war, and well over a third of them returned home as a result of the crisis.

Egypt discouraged the return of Palestinians who had lived in Egypt or the Gaza Strip before working in the Gulf. Those who left Gaza before 1967 have no passports, since Egypt never annexed the Gaza Strip—unlike Jordan in its relationship with West Bank Palestinians. Egypt would not agree to accept between 23,000 and 27,000 Gazans in this situation. In September, USCR wrote to the Egyptian authorities asking them to review their policy on admission of Palestinians expelled from Kuwait. They did not respond.

About 30,000 Kuwaitis briefly became refugees in Egypt during the Gulf War. Many had been vacationing in the country when Iraq invaded their homeland in August 1990. They never presented an assistance problem, however, as they were either supported by the Kuwaiti government-in-exile or had sufficient personal resources to maintain themselves. After the war, they returned to Kuwait.

Some Sudanese residents of Egypt were also affected by the Gulf War. In January, the Egyptian Interior Minister announced that 500 Sudanese nationals had been deported on security grounds. Some 2.5 to 3 million Sudanese reside in Egypt. Egypt has no visa requirements for Sudanese, who have been able to cross freely into the country. Since the 1978 Integration Agreement between the two countries, Sudanese in Egypt are granted permanent residence permits and are allowed to own land. Although some Sudanese clearly have a well-founded fear of persecution in Sudan, because of their permanent resident status they are not considered as refugees in need of protection.

Somalis in Egypt receive six-month residency permits that can be renewed with support from UNHCR. At the end of 1991, UNHCR was assisting 1,320 Somalis. This represented the largest nationality group assisted by the agency in Egypt, which had a total caseload of 2,242 at the end of the year.

The next largest nationality group assisted by UNHCR was Ethiopians (mostly Eritreans), numbering 585. But relations between UNHCR and the Ethiopians were uneasy at times. During the summer of 1991, a group of 33 Ethiopian asylum seekers was deported to Libya after spending eight months in an Egyptian jail. After arriving in Libya, the group was stranded with no means of support, and lived for a time in the open in a public park. Local nongovernmental sources in Egypt told USCR that the 33 were jailed because they held a demonstration outside the UNHCR offices, demanding to have their refugee status decided as a group, a request that UNHCR had rejected. UNHCR called the police, who arrested them. While incarcerated, the group agreed to allow UNHCR to make individual refugee status determinations, but each person was rejected.

Ethiopia/Eritrea

The overthrow in May of the regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam was the paramount event in a tumultuous year for Ethiopia.

The toppling of Mengistu and of the equally reviled regime of Somali dictator Mohamed Siyad Barre in January

1991 offered some hope for a better future for the people of the Horn of Africa, but also resulted in considerable short-term chaos: some 200,000 Somali refugees fled to Ethiopia beginning in January 1991; as many as 320,000 Ethiopian refugees who were living in Somalia returned to Ethiopia; all but 15,000 of the estimated 398,000 Sudanese refugees living in Ethiopia fled to southern Sudan; and many others, including up to 300,000 demobilized Ethiopian soldiers, became displaced or were left in difficult circumstances.

Besides the refugees and displaced, an estimated 6 million people in Ethiopia and Eritrea were at risk due to food shortages related to continuing drought and the military and political upheavals throughout the region.

On a more positive note, the war in Eritrea, the world's oldest civil war, came to an end, and the first of hundreds of thousands of Eritrean refugees living in Sudan began to return home.

Somali Refugees and Ethiopian Returnees from Somalia At the beginning of 1991, there were an estimated 385,000 Somali refugees in Ethiopia. Most were northern Somalis who fled their home region when civil war there escalated in 1988 (the Ethiopian refugees who were living in northwest Somalia returned to Ethiopia at that time). Hararghe, the area of eastern Ethiopia that the Somali refugees entered, was devoid of the basic infrastructure and natural resources necessary to sustain them. Lack of water sources and other logistical problems hampered relief efforts. Security in the camps was also a problem, as many refugees were armed. Also, UNHCR's management of the relief effort was widely criticized.

In January, fighting associated with the final rebel push to oust Siyad Barre from power in Mogadishu, the Somali capital, and the chaos that followed his departure, led more than 200,000 Somalis (mostly from southern Somalia) to flee to Ethiopia. Some settled in a difficult-to-reach region in southeastern Ethiopia, near the Ethiopian/Somali/Kenyan border. Others made their way north, to the existing Somali refugee camps in Hararghe. Their arrival in that region compounded the already problematic relief effort there. In April, the UN reported that malnutrition rates in some camps increased from 5 percent to 25 percent. That same month, USCR testified before the Africa Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, calling for increased U.S. aid for protection and assistance in the region.

The confusion and lawlessness (particularly in eastern Ethiopia) that followed the overthrow of the regime in Addis Ababa made the problem worse still. In early June, UNHCR pulled out 20 of its 30 international staff from Ethiopia, a move that was criticized by others involved in the relief effort. Between August and December, 347 of the UN trucks used to transport relief were stolen. UNHCR had to mount costly airlifts to get food to the refugees.

In November, UNHCR said, "Refugees are going hungry. . . . Security is dramatically deteriorating in the eastern part of Ethiopia, seriously threatening the distribution of food to the camps. . . . UNHCR officials in Dire Dawa cannot go into the camps to monitor the situation." In December, the UN reported that "armed elements from various local ethnic and political groupings" set up road blocks along all the main roads through which relief supplies travel to the refugee/returnee sites, and were demanding food before allowing trucks to proceed.

All but an estimated 35,000 of the 355,000 Ethiopian refugees said to have been living in southern Somalia also fled that country. Although some returned to their home areas, many remained living alongside—and in similar conditions to—the Somali refugees in camps in southeastern Ethiopia and Hararghe (several new camps were established in Hararghe to accommodate the new refugees and returnees). In late December, a UN team reported that over a 22-day period that month, 452 deaths were recorded in returnee areas as a result of malnutrition and diarrhea.

With the collapse of the government in Mogadishu, the Somali National Movement, the rebel group that had been fighting against the government in northwest Somalia, took control over all of that region and declared it independent, naming it the Somaliland Republic. The relative stability that followed in Somaliland, combined with deteriorating conditions in the refugee camps in Ethiopia, led some 100,000 Somali refugees to return to Somaliland, and several thousand to move to Djibouti. More would likely have returned to Somaliland had UNHCR begun to implement a repatriation plan earlier. At the end of 1991, UNHCR estimated that there were 519,000 Somali refugees in Ethiopia.

Mengistu Regime Falls; Ethiopian Jews Evacuated; EPLF Captures all of Eritrea On May 21, Mengistu Haile Mariam, who in 1974 led the group of young military officials who deposed Emperor Haile Selassie I and established a Marxist regime in Ethiopia, resigned as president of Ethiopia and fled to exile in Zimbabwe. During Mengistu's 17 years in power, Ethiopia, one of the world's poorest nations, built up sub-Saharan Africa's largest army (an estimated 300,000 of whose soldiers, mostly conscripts, were reportedly killed in civil wars against a number of ethnic-based insurgent groups), developed one of Africa's worst human rights records, forcibly uprooted millions of people as part of government schemes to reshape the country and society, and suffered disastrous famines, made worse by war and ineffective economic policies.

In the days between Mengistu's departure from Addis Ababa and the final collapse of the Mengistu regime, Israel, with considerable diplomatic assistance from the United States, mounted an airlift to evacuate all remaining Ethiopian Jews (often referred to as Falashas) to Israel. Some 14,500 Ethiopian Jews, who were already in Addis Ababa awaiting places on a planned airlift to Israel, were evacuated within a 30-hour period. Israel paid the Ethiopian government $35 million to allow the evacuation to take place, and the United States reportedly threatened not to participate in peace talks that it had set up between the Ethiopian government and the Ethiopian and Eritrean rebel groups unless the evacuation was allowed to proceed.

Mengistu's resignation came as Addis Ababa was surrounded by the rebel forces of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a fairly new coalition group that nominally included Ethiopians of various ethnic and political backgrounds, but that was essentially dominated by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). (For years, the TPLF was regarded as a hard-core Marxist group.) In view of growing chaos in the city after Mengistu's departure, the United States urged the EPRDF to enter and take control of Addis, which they did on May 28.

On May 24–25, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) had captured the Eritrean capital, Asmara, and the port city of Assab, bringing all of Eritrea under its control. The EPLF established a transitional government in Eritrea and called for a UN-monitored referendum on Eritrean independence within two years. The EPRDF acceded to Eritrea's de-facto independence, bringing three decades of conflict over Eritrea's future to a seeming end.

After taking control in Addis, the EPRDF promised to institute democracy, respect human rights, and offer both some level of regional autonomy and a role in the central government to Ethiopia's main ethnic groups. However, as the months went by, there was increasing tension between the EPRDF and various ethnic groups, and particularly with the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), which also fought the Mengistu regime for years. Oromos are the single largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, and the OLF was irked that the EPRDF was not allowing the OLF enough say in the Oromo areas.

The EPRDF extended its control over many areas of the country where its forces had not previously been present, but it was not very successful in the east. That contributed to widespread banditry and inter-ethnic clashes that severely disrupted relief efforts for the refugees and returnees there.

An estimated 51,000 Ethiopian soldiers (and their families) who had been based primarily in Eritrea fled to Sudan after the EPLF captured all of Eritrea. Between August and November, UNHCR carried out an airlift to repatriate the soldiers and their families. Another 250,000 Ethiopian soldiers (including many injured and disabled as well as former EPLF prisoners of war) headed south towards Addis Ababa after the EPLF takeover of Asmara (the EPLF reportedly also deported a large number of Ethiopian civilians who lived in Eritrea). The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) mounted a major relief effort to provide emergency assistance to the demobilized soldiers, who were destitute, ill-clothed, and had no provisions. On June 20, ICRC said that the plight of the demobilized soldiers was "becoming more alarming every day, as the rainy season and the risk of hypothermia are coupled with inadequate food and sanitation." By late November, the ICRC had helped almost all of the former soldiers return to their homes.

Sudanese Refugees Flee All but some 15,000 of the southern Sudanese refugees who were living in southwestern Ethiopia returned to southern Sudan after Mengistu's ouster. Even before Mengistu fell, there was fighting in the area where the refugees were living, and relief routes between Addis and the refugee camps were cut off. In April, a WFP official was quoted as saying, "I do not see how they (the refugees) can be getting anything to eat." Reports about the specific cause of the refugees' return to Sudan were, however, contradictory.

Some reports said that the refugees fled after the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) had been involved in fighting (possibly in support of Mengistu's troops) against either the EPRDF or OLF in which they were defeated and subsequently withdrew to southern Sudan. The refugees then fled fearing retribution by the EPRDF (the refugees were of the same ethnic groups and from the same regions as members of the SPLA, a southern Sudanese rebel group that enjoyed support from the Mengistu regime; the EPRDF, on the other hand, has been supported by the government of Sudan, the SPLA's opponent in the Sudanese civil war). Other reports said that one of the refugee camps, Itang, was either attacked by the EPRDF or OLF, or looted by retreating Mengistu soldiers.

As the refugees crossed from Ethiopia into Sudan~~, they~~ were bombed by airplanes belonging to the Sudanese military. Inside southern Sudan, their conditions were initially dismal (see Sudan).

Guinea

In March 1991, following an incursion into Sierra Leone by rebels from Liberia, more than 96,000 Sierra Leonean refugees—plus some 10,000 Liberian refugees who had been living in Sierra Leone—entered Guinea. (In November 1991, UNHCR reported that there were 169,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea.)

Strained resources made assisting this new influx of refugees difficult. The refugees entered areas of Guinea even more remote and less able to accommodate them than was the case with the Liberian refugees who entered beginning in December 1989 and throughout 1990. Problems with food and health care arose almost immediately, and some refugees died from an outbreak of severe diarrhea. While many of the Sierra Leonean refugees moved into the homes of Guineans, a number of others built their own temporary shelters on the outskirts of existing villages.

Because it was easier to identify refugees living in the mini-camps than refugees cohabitating (the local term for refugees living in the homes of locals) in villages, assistance reached them earlier. That led to a further exodus of refugees from villages into mini-camps. Some indicated that they believed that UNHCR wanted them to move into camps so that they could better assist them.

The mini-camps, being unplanned, pose logistical challenges. Refugees there are likely to have greater needs and less of a security net than those cohabitating with local families. Since the mini-camps are not official refugee camps, they do not have the infrastructure, services, or administration that usually exists in refugee camps.

Besides these new Sierra Leonean refugees, Guinea hosts 397,000 Liberian refugees (10,000 of whom entered from Sierra Leone, where they had been living, in 1991). The majority entered in 1990, fleeing fighting and human rights abuses associated with the civil war in Liberia.

The international response to the 1990 refugee influx was slow and inadequate. It was months before any kind of coordinated international relief effort was in place. By 1991, the situation had improved significantly.

Liberian refugees in Guinea are mostly cohabitating with the local people. As in Côte d'Ivoire, cohabitation works best in small villages in the border areas. It works less well in the larger towns, particularly Nzerekore.

Since the refugee influx into Guinea began, getting food to the refugees has proved a major problem. Many of the refugees are located in remote villages that are difficult to reach, particularly during the rainy season. Instead of receiving food rations monthly, refugees (both the Liberians and Sierra Leoneans) receive food every six weeks to two months.

Guinean officials have allowed refugees to set up their own education programs, use Guinean school buildings in the afternoons and weekends, and have given refugees in Nzerekore full-time use of a large building that now houses a primary and a secondary school. According to UNHCR, some 26,000 refugee students are attending classes in 85 schools.

Refugee health workers have been incorporated into the local health care system (at least in larger towns and some villages), easing language and trust problems. Refugees can use local health facilities and receive available medicines free of charge (UNHCR provides funds for drugs for the local clinics). But when USCR visited Guinea in August to document the situation of refugees there, many refugees told USCR staff that gaining access to those services was a problem.

Involvement of the refugees in the relief process has also proved helpful.

Most Sudanese refugees living in Ethiopia suddenly fled that country and returned to the war zone in southern Sudan after the fall of the Mengistu regime. UNHCR/B. Press

UNHCR has encouraged the establishment of 40 refugee committees, corresponding roughly to the food distribution points. The agency has given the committees a small stipend to buy office supplies, and is hoping to give each committee a bicycle, so that committee members can visit the various villages in the areas they cover.

In June, problems arose between refugees and the local authorities as a result of contested local elections in Nzerekore. Local officials claimed that many refugees voted, influencing the outcome. Anger over the election results led to several days of rioting in Nzerekore, during which the Guinean authorities arrested a number of people, including six refugees.

On July 8, UNHCR issued a notice to refugees in Nzerekore that warned, "The Government of the Republic of Guinea calls on all refugees from Liberia and Sierra Leone who have been given asylum in Guinea to respect the laws of Guinea. Under no circumstances should a refugee become involved in the internal political affairs of Guinea."

Kenya

Prior to 1991, Kenya hosted a relatively small population of urban refugees. However, the fall of the Somali and Ethiopian regimes in January and May, respectively, led to larger scale influxes of refugees into Kenya, and the establishment of several new refugee camps to accommodate them.

Somali Refugees The largest numbers of new refugees are from Somalia. Somali refugees began arriving—by air, land, and sea—in early January 1991, as the civil war in Somalia exploded. The Kenyan authorities, who in recent years attempted to stop Somali refugees from entering Kenya, were initially reluctant to accept the new refugees. Eventually they gave in, and allowed UNHCR and other agencies to provide assistance to the growing refugee population.

The earliest arrivals were mostly former government and military officials associated with the regime of deposed Somali dictator Mohamed Siyad Barre. They fled Mogadishu and other cities by air, and took up residence in hotels in downtown Nairobi. They were soon followed by larger numbers of ordinary Somalis fleeing both by sea and land. They fled Mogadishu and Kismayo, two cities that saw heavy fighting, as well as other regions of central and southern Somalia. (A much larger number of Somalis fled to Ethiopia.)

The sea journey proved fatal for some, and harsh for others. In early March, one boat sank off the Kenyan coast, killing 130 Somali refugees. In April and May, Kenya refused to allow several other vessels carrying refugees to dock for prolonged periods, leading to severe health problems and conditions described as "pathetic and sickening" for those on board. According to a U.S. State Department report, on May 25, Kenyan navy vessels towed two boats carrying Somali refugees out to sea and cut them adrift in rough seas. The boats capsized and 37 of the refugees onboard drowned. The Kenyan government denied that the Navy had towed the boats to sea, claiming instead that the Navy vessels were attempting to assist the refugees. The United States and UNHCR requested an official enquiry, but by the end of December the Kenyan authorities had not acted on the request.

The refugees who arrived by sea were housed temporarily at the Mombassa city fairgrounds, and later transferred to a new refugee camp, Utange, built a few miles outside the city (in December, some 7,500 Somalis were there).

Somali refugees entered Kenya by land at about 10 different points along the Kenyan-Somali border. They were consolidated at two sites, the largest being Liboi, a remote spot 80 miles from the nearest large town. There is virtually no water at Liboi in the dry season (causing sanitation and health problems), while in the rainy season roads there frequently become impassable, preventing access to the camps. UNHCR urged the Kenyan authorities to identify a more suitable site than Liboi for the refugees, but the Kenyans refused, citing security concerns. In February, the Kenyan government, alarmed that the refugees might engage in banditry or incite trouble among Kenya's sizeable ethnic Somali population, reportedly warned the refugees against engaging in any criminal or political activity in Kenya. Later in the year, the presence of arms in the refugee camps did in fact lead to security problems.

The Somali influx continued throughout 1991. Somali refugees numbered 16,000 in late March, 39,000 in early July, and 92,200 by the end of December. Liboi became very overcrowded, and malnutrition and disease became widespread (the rate of malnutrition was 29 percent in June). In early September, health conditions had begun to improve marginally, but a new influx that month of more than 16,000 Somalis created new problems. Noting that up to 30 percent of the new arrivals had hepatitis, UNHCR sent a special medical coordinator and a team of medical experts from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to Liboi.

In December, following renewed fighting in Somalia, a new influx of Somali refugees began. Many of the new arrivals were in very poor physical condition, and there were many deaths. The Kenyan press and refugee advocates criticized UNHCR and the Kenyan government for failing to make adequate provisions to respond to a new influx.

Ethiopian Refugees At the end of 1990, Kenya hosted some 3,000 urban Ethiopian refugees. A new influx of Ethiopians began in 1991, when some 3,000 Ethiopians who had been living as refugees in Somalia fled to Kenya along with Somali refugees. The Kenyan authorities moved the Ethiopians to a camp at Marsabit, near the Ethiopian border. A second wave of Ethiopian refugees, some 10,000 to 15,000 strong (including some former soldiers), entered at Moyale in late May and early June, following the ouster of Mengistu Haile Mariam from power in Addis Ababa. An estimated 7,500 of these refugees repatriated between late June and early August. At the end of December, there were 11,800 Ethiopian refugees in Kenya.

The Ethiopian refugees have faced considerable difficulties. The 3,000 Ethiopians who arrived from Somalia were crowded into Marsabit camp, a closed camp built to accommodate only 1,000 refugees. The camp was closed in September, and the refugees were moved to a new camp at Walda (as were the Ethiopians from Moyale), even though only a fraction of the housing needed at Walda had been completed.

More than 92,200 Somali refugees entered Kenya between December 1990 and December 1991. conditions, water, and a high rate of malnutrition led to criticisms of the relief effort.
UNHCR/B. Press

Reportedly, not all the Ethiopian refugees who tried to enter Kenya from Somalia were allowed to do so. The Kenyan government, apparently worried that the Ethiopian government would not allow Ethiopian refugees coming from Somalia to repatriate, reportedly blocked entry to an unspecified number of Ethiopians. In May, USCR (which had visited Kenya in April) expressed its concern to the Kenyan embassy in Washington regarding these reports. The Kenyan Ambassador wrote to USCR that the Kenyan government had, under very difficult circumstances, "done its best to receive and accommodate" refugees.

Kenya also hosts an estimated 2,000 Rwandese refugees, 700 Ugandan refugees, and 450 refugees of other nationalities (mostly Sudanese). Many of these are urban refugees living in and around Nairobi. They are often harassed by the Kenyan authorities, who in late 1990 arrested and expelled more than 1,000 urban refugees, mostly Ugandans.

The Somali and Ethiopian refugees who arrived in 1991 do not have official refugee status in Kenya. They are regarded as asylum seekers. The Kenyan government says that to be granted refugee status, each refugee must be individually screened by the Eligibility Committee, a group that is supposed to approve or reject asylum claims, but which has not met since October 1990. UNHCR has asked the Kenyan government to grant blanket refugee status to Somalis and Ethiopians (as is generally done in Africa in cases where there are large refugee populations), but the government has refused.

When the Eligibility Committee did meet in 1989 and 1990, it often rejected many of the asylum requests brought before it. UNHCR considers about 2,000 refugees whom the Kenyan government denied refugee status to be mandate refugees. They cannot work, and, prior to 1991, were not eligible for assistance. But in April, the UNHCR representative in Kenya told USCR that they would be assisted.

Kenya granted temporary asylum to 350 Libyans at U.S. request. The United States had been training the Libyans as an anti-Libyan commando force in Chad, but evacuated them after the coup in Chad in December 1990. The United States reportedly agreed to release $5 million in military aid to Kenya in exchange for the Kenyan government's accepting the Libyans as refugees. Most of them were subsequently resettled in the United States.

Many live in Libol camp, where overcrowded

(By late January 1992, there were 140,000 Somali and 17,200 Ethiopian refugees in Kenya. A joint UN and Kenyan government assessment team that visited the refugee camps from January 19 to 27 found that "arrangements in all the camps were grossly inadequate," that the number of deaths and level of malnutrition were "far higher than would be expected," and that "although exacerbated by an influx of new arrivals, the poor health and nutrition situation has existed for many months." More than 200 children died at the Liboi and Ifo camps in January. Large numbers of Somali refugees—at times more than 1,000 per day—continued to enter Kenya in February 1992, and conditions in the camps deteriorated even further, leading to heightened criticism of UNHCR's relief effort.)

Liberia

A cease-fire declared in November 1990 between the main factions involved in the Liberian civil war held fast throughout 1991, but a political resolution to the conflict, which began in December 1989, has yet to be achieved. More than 661,000 Liberian refugees remain outside their country, primarily in Guinea (397,000) and Côte d'Ivoire (240,000), with smaller numbers in Sierra Leone (17,200), Ghana (6,000), Nigeria (1,000), and Gambia (500). More than 500,000 other Liberians are internally displaced.

Also, Liberia remains a divided country. Monrovia, the capital, is controlled by an interim government installed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). An ECOWAS peacekeeping force known as ECOMOG provides security in Monrovia.

Although there is now a sense of normalcy in Monrovia, it is false. Some shops and businesses have reopened, but relatively few people have jobs. Most depend on continuing free food distributions and on financial help from relatives in the United States.

Children are among those most victimized by the war. Many lost one or both parents, or became separated from their families. Thousands were conscripted by the rebel groups, and in some cases became perpetrators of violence. Many others were witnesses to or victims of violence. Assisting its traumatized children is a major challenge for Liberia.

In July, USCR testified before the Subcommittee on Africa of the U.S. House of Representatives, in support of a bill providing assistance for Liberian relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. USCR also called for an initiative to assist Liberia's traumatized children. USCR visited Monrovia in August, and found that while there is still a shortage of hospital beds and medicines, health care has improved considerably since USCR's first site visit in November 1990. Malnutrition among children has declined from 35 percent to 2.5 percent.

The rest of Liberia—more than 95 percent of the country's territory—is at least nominally controlled by the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), the rebel group whose campaign to oust the much criticized government of late President Samuel Doe set the war in motion. The NPFL has set up an alternate government, the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly (NPRA), based in Gbarnga.

Security in the NPFL-controlled areas is tenuous. Undisciplined boy-soldiers continue to harass civilians. In July, fighting in Grand Gedeh County between the NPFL and a remaining Krahn resistance force led more than 10,000 refugees, almost all of them ethnic Krahns, to flee to Côte d'Ivoire. Doe, killed in Monrovia in September 1990, was a member of the minority Krahn group. He concentrated much government power in their hands.

In December, the UN suspended its relief operations in Grand Gedeh County after NPFL soldiers attacked one of its staff members there. Although relief groups operate in other NPFL-controlled areas, their ability to travel is restricted. Consequently, little aid reaches civilians in most NPFL areas.

Two other participants in the Liberian conflict, the former army and a splinter rebel group, both based near Monrovia, remain armed. In mid-1991, yet another armed group, based in Sierra Leone, entered the fray.

ECOWAS has led the search for a political resolution to the Liberian conflict. At an ECOWAS-sponsored meeting in Yamassoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, in October, Taylor and Sawyer agreed to the encampment and disarmament of troops under ECOMOG supervision, to be followed within six months by internationally supervised elections. But the other armed factions were not invited to participate in the talks, and their cooperation with the peace process is not assured. None of the Yamassoukro provisions had been implemented by year's end.

Although some 56,000 Liberian refugees have already returned home on their own, the vast majority of those who fled remain in exile. If, when, and how they will return, and what will be done to help them reintegrate once they are back, are major questions facing Liberia and the international community.

Unlike the UN plan that mandated that Namibian refugees be repatriated in time for them to participate in Namibia's first elections, the Yamassoukro agreements do not provide for the repatriation of Liberian refugees before elections, even though they represent a significant percentage of the Liberian electorate. The issue of formal, assisted repatriation is therefore left entirely to UNHCR.

UNHCR has drafted a repatriation plan, but has not set a date for its implementation. The plan provides for the refugees' return, but anticipates only limited UNHCR involvement in their reintegration. Such assistance is expected to come through the UN's comprehensive Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Program for Liberia. But a UN appeal for funds for that program has met a poor international reponse.

(*In January 1992, USCR issued a report,* Uprooted Liberians: Casualties of a Brutal War, *that focused on conditions for civilians in Liberia and Liberian refugees in neighboring countries.*)

Malawi

Malawi, one of Africa's smallest and poorest countries, hosts the continent's—and one of the world's—largest refugee population.

Mozambican refugees began entering Malawi in 1976, and have continued to arrive ever since. At the end of 1990, there were an estimated 909,000 Mozambican refugees in Malawi. During 1991, an average of some 3,400 new Mozambican refugees entered Malawi per month. By the end of December, Mozambican refugees numbered some 950,000. The increase in refugees fleeing to Malawi is attributed to increased fighting in Mozambique as both government forces and Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) rebels jockeyed for position and advantage as they negotiated in Italian-sponsored peace talks (see Mozambique).

This massive influx of refugees has severely taxed Malawi's natural resources and social services, drained food reserves, and strained the nation's transportation system. Nevertheless, Malawi has shown the refugees admirable generosity.

The refugees' situation is far from ideal. Most live at subsistence level. Distributing food and providing essential services such as water, health, education, and sanitation have been difficult not only due to the large numbers, but also because they are widely scattered (approximately half of the refugees live in refugee camps; the remainder are living in and near Malawian villages in 12 of Malawi's 24 administrative districts).

A UNHCR funding crisis has hampered assistance. In the past two years, UNHCR has had to cut $6 million from its budget for Mozambican refugees in Malawi. According to the agency, that has resulted in "an increase in waterborne diseases, inadequate storage systems, poor road conditions (due to lack of repair) . . . inadequate clothing and insufficient non-food items . . . and inadequate resources for community services and education." In 1990, the cuts contributed to a nutritional deficiency among the refugees that led to an outbreak of pellagra (niacin deficiency disease). In March 1991, UNHCR and WFP warned that there was "an alarming food supply situation for the Mozambican refugee feeding operation in Malawi," and urged donors to respond quickly to the agencies' appeal for food aid for the refugees.

Although the Malawian response to Mozambican refugees has for years been heralded as one of Africa's most generous, tensions between locals and refugees have been rising in recent years.

A group of Mozambican refugees living in Chikwawa district who are Jehovah's Witnesses encountered difficulties with the Malawian authorities. The Jehovah's Witnesses religious group is banned in Malawi. According to UNHCR, the Malawian authorities told the Mozambican refugees that they had to either stop proselytizing or face prosecution. Some refugees from the group complied, but others opted to return to Mozambique.

Small numbers of refugees repatriate to Mozambique each year, some with UNHCR assistance and some by their own means. A number of them are said to later return to Malawi.

The Malawian government's treatment of its own people has been harshly criticized. The U.S. State Department has called Malawi's human rights performance "the reverse" of its "exemplary" handling of the refugee program.

(*By late February 1992, there were more than 982,000 Mozambican refugees in Malawi.*)

Mauritania

A relatively minor incident on the Mauritania-Senegal border in April 1989 led to communal violence in both countries. In Senegal, locals targeted Mauritanians living there, while Senegalese living in Mauritania were also attacked.

To avoid further violence or possibly war, the governments of Mauritania and Senegal agreed to the repatriation of 90,000 Senegalese from Mauritania and 100,000 Mauritanians from Senegal. But the Mauritanian government used the opportunity to deport thousands of black Mauritanian citizens to Senegal. Other black Mauritanians fled there due to the increased harassment being directed at blacks, especially those living near the Senegalese border. More than 53,000 Mauritanian refugees, including those who fled voluntarily and those who were expelled by force, are living in Senegal.

The government of Mauritania continues to be widely criticized for human rights abuses against its black citizens. Fair-skinned, Arab-speaking "Moors", also known as "Maurs" or "Beydanes", who control the government and hold most political and economic power, still keep black slaves, although Mauritania has officially abolished slavery three times this century. According to Africa Watch, slaves "are routinely tortured and subjected to acts of appalling cruelty for such offenses as disobeying their master or attempting to escape."

The Senegalese government deported some 22,000 Senegalese citizens ethnically linked to Mauritanian Moors in Mauritania. The Mauritanian government has granted refugee status and offered to extend Mauritanian citizenship to this group. Most are now socially integrated and economically self-sufficient.

During 1989 and 1990, some 10,000 Mauritanians also fled or were expelled to Mali.

Between November 1990 and January 1991, the Mauritanian security forces arrested as many as 3,000 black Mauritanians, ostensibly for supporting an alleged coup attempt by black military officers. More than 200 of those arrested were reportedly executed or died as a result of severe torture while in prison. Many others were crippled. In March, the Mauritanian government declared an amnesty and released the remaining detainees.

In early 1991, an estimated 15,000 Malian refugees, mostly ethnic Tuaregs, entered southeastern Mauritania. Although they are receiving UNHCR assistance, they are said to be living in very poor conditions. A number of the refugees were affected by a measles epidemic. A new influx of Tuareg Malians began in late 1991. Some 3,000 new refugees had entered by the end of December.

(By mid-February 1992, the number of ethnic Tuareg Malian refugees in Mauritania had increased to 30,000.)

Mozambique

At the end of 1991, there were 1,483,000 Mozambican refugees living in neighboring countries (Malawi, 950,000; South Africa, 200,000; Zimbabwe, 197,000; Tanzania, 72,000; Swaziland, 39,500; Zambia, 25,000). The number of refugees from Mozambique is nearly twice that from any other African nation.

The flight of Mozambican refugees continued in 1991. An additional 41,000 Mozambicans entered Malawi during the year. Their flight, like that of other Mozambican before them, was due to the fighting associated with the civil war in Mozambique, and particularly the terror imposed on the Mozambican people by the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) rebel group. During 1991, the fighting intensified and reached previously less affected regions as the two sides sought to gain maximum ground in order to strengthen their hand at peace talks that took place during the year. According to the Mozambican government, nearly 2 million Mozambicans are internally displaced, and another 2.4 million Mozambicans who have been affected by the conflict also depend on international assistance (as a result of the fighting, only 5 percent of Mozambique's arable land is under cultivation). UNHCR assists an estimated 129,000 former refugees who have returned to Mozambique (a figure that may be high, as a number of refugees who have repatriated to Mozambique are said to have again fled to Malawi when their home areas came under attack).

An estimated 667,000 Liberian refugees remain outside their country. A November 1990 cease-fire largely ended Liberia's brutal civil war, but there is still insecurity in some areas, and only limited progress has been made toward resolving the conflict. USCR/H. Ruiz

Many Mozambicans are living in dire circumstances, and there are frequent reports of starvation and widespread malnutrition in different regions of the country. For example, in mid-1991, the U.S. State Department reported that in the capital of Zambezia Province, 30 to 50 people were starving every day. In the past two years, donor response to Mozambique's requests for aid has been poor, and the distribution of the food aid that does arrive has been hampered by security and transportation problems. Concerns about corruption, which until recently had not been considered a problem, led the European Community to suspend part of its food aid to Mozambique in August/September.

RENAMO, often referred to as the Khmer Rouge of Africa, is known for the brutal atrocities it commits against civilians. Among RENAMO's primary victims have been Mozambique's children. According to a 1991 USCR report, *Children of Mozambique: The Cost of Survival*, written by Dr. Neil Boothby, "Boys as young as six have served as soldiers, children of all ages have been the targets of systematic, country-wide abductions, and large numbers have been killed or been victims of torture, rape, and forced labor." Estimates of the number of Mozambicans who have died directly or indirectly as a result of the conflict reach as high as 900,000, nearly half children.

For years, RENAMO, created by white Rhodesians in the 1970s and later supported by South Africa, has fought the formerly Marxist government of Mozambique with little apparent political agenda. In the past two years, the government of Mozambique has moved substantially away from Marxism. It has adopted a new constitution that provides for multiparty democracy and that guarantees basic human rights and freedoms, and has dropped socialist economic policies. It has also sought to engage RENAMO in dialogue aimed at ending the war.

During 1991, the two parties held several rounds of peace talks, but accomplished little. A partial cease-fire was declared in December 1990, but RENAMO broke it several times before the first round of 1991 peace talks took place in late January.

Some observers said that RENAMO stalled at all the peace talks in order to gain further military advantage, while seeking some respectability through its participation in the Italian-mediated talks.

The ICRC became involved in a political mess when a shipment of second hand clothing from Germany destined for RENAMO-held areas was found to contain military uniforms. The ICRC explained that it was not aware that the uniforms were included in the shipment. But the fact that the uniforms (originally destined for the now-defunct East German military) were identical to those used by the Mozambican government's defense and security forces led to mistrust of the ICRC in Maputo, the Mozambican capital, and resulted in the expulsion of the ICRC delegate.

Namibia

Namibia gained its independence from South Africa in March 1990, the last step in a year-long process that included the return of some 42,700 former refugees from more than 40 countries around the world that had offered Namibians refuge. The repatriation, carried out by UNHCR, was particularly costly because the UN Security Council Resolution that paved the way for Namibian independence mandated that elections take place within a specific time-frame, and that refugees return home in time to register to vote in the country's first elections. That meant that almost all Namibian returnees had to be flown home.

Although provision was made for a limited program of assistance to the returnees, two years after the repatriation, the majority of the returnees were still unemployed.

The Namibian government, a number of whose officials lived for years as refugees in other countries, has yet to accede to the UN Refugee Convention and Protocol, or to develop a domestic refugee policy. On several occasions, it has deported or jailed persons seeking asylum in Namibia. The government is reviewing the cases of 128 individuals determined to be mandate refugees by UNHCR. It is holding two of these individuals in detention and has granted the others temporary residence—but has told them that they must make plans to leave Namibia.

Namibia does, however, offer refuge to an estimated 30,000 mostly rural Angolans living in northern Namibia, near the Angolan border.

Rwanda

The exile of refugees from Rwanda, mostly ethnic Tutsis, has endured three decades—one of the longest in modern history. Throughout the 1980s, Rwanda refused to allow the refugees to return en masse, arguing that Rwanda, whose government is dominated by the minority ethnic Hutu group, is overpopulated.

An invasion of Rwanda in October 1990 by the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), launched mainly by Rwandese exiles living in Uganda (see Uganda), drew world attention to the plight of Rwandese refugees. In a February 1991 Issue Paper, *Exile from Rwanda: Background to an Invasion*, USCR recommended that "Rwanda, its neighbors, the OAU, and the UN should establish satisfactory resolution of the situation of Rwandese refugees as a primary and integral part of ... [a] peace process." The Rwandese refugee situation, USCR's report added, "cries out for a satisfactory solution, not simply a papering over of the problem." That same month, leaders of Uganda, other countries where Rwandese are living, and representatives of UNHCR and the OAU met in Tanzania to discuss the future of Rwandese refugees.

According to the Dar es Salaam Declaration issued following the meeting, the Rwandese government pledged to recognize that "voluntary repatriation is a legitimate right of Rwandese refugees," and to "remove all obstacles which impede the return of Rwandese refugees to their country." The participating governments called on UNHCR to formulate a plan of action to implement the repatriation and reintegration of the refugees. The governments of the refugee-hosting countries agreed to offer citizenship to those Rwandese refugees who choose not to repatriate. However, because there was no peace, little progress was made on implementing any of the meeting's recommendations during the year (although in October, Rwanda passed legislation that offers amnesty to all Rwandese refugees who choose to repatriate).

Fighting continued sporadically along the Rwandese/Ugandan border throughout 1991. In March, the RPF distributed a list of 260 names of people it claimed the government massacred in the border areas. The group claimed that the government had killed more than 1,000 others. More than 100,000 Rwandese are said to have been displaced by fighting between the government and the RPF, although the RPF claimed that the government deliberately moved those people away from the area so that they could not provide support to the rebels.

Armed confrontations in late November between government troops and armed insurgents in Burundi (where the government is dominated by ethnic Tutsis, who are a minority of the population) led 11,000 ethnic Hutu Burundian refugees to flee to Rwanda (see Burundi). They joined more than 21,500 Burundian refugees already living in Rwanda. Most of these earlier Burundian refugees, also ethnic Hutus, have been in Rwanda since 1972. Both Rwanda and Burundi have a history of bloody conflict between their ethnic Hutu and Tutsi populations.

Senegal

An estimated 53,000 Mauritanian refugees are living in Senegal. They fled Mauritania—or were forcibly expelled by the Mauritanian authorities—beginning in April 1989, following border clashes between Mauritania and Senegal and subsequent killings in each country of nationals of the other (see Mauritania). The refugees, more than 70 percent of whom are under age 18, are living in some 220 settlements along the Senegal River, which forms the border between Mauritania and Senegal. They are located in a hot, inhospitable region. Though they are assisted by the Senegalese government, UNHCR, the Red Cross, and other organizations, their lives remain bleak. Most of the refugees say they wish to return home. Although in 1991 Senegal and Mauritania held discussions aimed at easing tension along their common border, little progress was made on the issue of repatriation. The refugees are likely to remain in Senegal

The Liberian civil war spilled over into Sierra Leone when rebels (said to be mostly Liberians) invaded that country in March 1991. Above, internally displaced Sierra Leoneans return home after the army recaptured their village. USCR/H. Ruiz

until their security in their home area can be guaranteed.

Besides the refugees, another 90,000 Senegalese who had been living in Mauritania were repatriated to Senegal in 1989. Most have been socially integrated, but some 15,000 remain living alongside the refugees in similar circumstances. An estimated 100,000 of the 300,000 Mauritanians who lived in Senegal before April 1989 were repatriated to Mauritania. Some 22,000 Senegalese citizens who were expelled to Mauritania by the Senegalese authorities have been granted refugee status in Mauritania.

Some 5,000 refugees from Guinea-Bissau who are fully integrated and self sufficient were granted Senegalese citizenship in 1991. About 100 urban refugees of various nationalities also live in Senegal.

Senegalese refugees continued to flee a fierce but little-publicized conflict being fought between Senegalese troops and a rebel group in Senegal's Casamance region, which is sandwiched between Gambia and Guinea-Bissau. According to the Guinea-Bissau Red Cross, more than 1,600 Senegalese refugees entered Guinea-Bissau in November 1990. Other sources say that by late 1991, there were some 4,600 Senegalese refugees in Guinea-Bissau.

Sierra Leone

Liberian refugees began entering Sierra Leone in May 1990. Many of the early arrivals were residents of the Liberian capital, Monrovia, who fled as rebel forces approached the city. Between June and September 1990, the Liberian refugee population in Sierra Leone soared from 20,000 to an estimated 125,000, as rural people from western Liberia also fled. Most of the refugees were housed in the homes of local people in villages along the border or in public buildings in the larger towns.

In early March 1991, rebels entered eastern Sierra Leone from Liberia and captured a number of towns and villages. It remains unclear who the rebels were or why they attacked Sierra Leone. The most commonly heard theory—one favored by the Sierra Leonean government—is that the incursion was the doing of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), the rebel group that controls most of Liberia outside Monrovia. The NPFL's motivation for the attack was said to be either revenge for Sierra Leone's participation in the peace-keeping force sent by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to restore order in Monrovia, or for the spoils to be had in what is Sierra Leone's richest and most fertile region (one of the rebels' first targets was reportedly a diamond mine at Zimmi).

Although many of the rebels were Liberian, and probably associated with the NPFL (NPFL leader Charles Taylor has repeatedly denied that he was behind the incursion), there is speculation that at least some of the rebels were Sierra Leoneans opposed to the government in Freetown.

The rebel incursion brought the horrors of the Liberian war—killings, atrocities, fear—to Sierra Leone. It also led to the uprooting of several hundred thousand people. As many as 169,000 Sierra Leonean refugees have fled to Guinea. Another 145,000 have become internally displaced, and some 12,000 who were caught behind the rebel lines were either forced to move into Liberia or voluntarily fled there. It is not known how many Liberian refugees living in Sierra Leone were also caught behind rebel lines (some relief groups estimate as many as 30,000 to 40,000), or what happened to them.

The plight of the displaced Sierra Leoneans drew little public attention. Relief groups already in the area to assist Liberian refugees set up food distribution and health care programs, but securing funds for their work proved difficult. That was due in part to the international community's lack of awareness of the severity of the problem, but also to poor coordination among Sierra Leonean authorities, UN agencies, and private relief groups, which led to a delay in the Sierra Leonean government's issuing an adequate appeal for international aid.

USCR visited Sierra Leone in September 1991 and found that many of the displaced were living in poor conditions and still receiving inadequate assistance.

Liberian refugees living in Sierra Leone were also affected by the rebel attack. Tens of thousands of them fled to Freetown not only to escape the rebels, but also to escape the hostility directed at them by local people, who vented their anger that the war had crossed into Sierra Leone.

Many refugees approached UNHCR asking to repatriate, but the agency said that it could not promote mass repatriation at that time because of overcrowded conditions in Monrovia. The ECOWAS-supported interim government in Monrovia arranged for the Liberian refugees to be repatriated by ship from Freetown.

Estimates of the number of refugees who repatriated from Freetown vary widely, but 12,000 to 15,000 is the range most commonly cited. Only some 7,200 Liberian refugees are still assisted in Sierra Leone, all housed at the Waterloo refugee camp, a few miles outside Freetown. Another 10,000 Liberian refugees are thought to remain in Sierra Leone without international assistance. It would appear, judging by the number of Liberian refugees who either fled to Guinea (10,000), returned to Monrovia (12,000-15,000), or remain in Sierra Leone (17,200), that the 125,000 estimate of the Liberian refugee population in Sierra Leone prior to the rebel incursion was high.

Somalia (including Somaliland)

1991 was the most turbulent year in Somalia's history. The year began, and ended, with the Somali capital, Mogadishu, engulfed in violence. Thousands of Somalis were killed; many others were wounded; hundreds of thousands were uprooted.

There has been civil war in Somalia, mostly centered in the country's northwest region, for several years. In 1988, following an offensive in the north by the Somali National Movement (SNM) rebel group, which draws its support mainly from the northern Somali Issak clan, the war escalated. Some 400,000 Somali refugees fled to Ethiopia (about 31,000 fled to Djibouti), as did all of the Ethiopian refugees who had been living in northern Somalia. The SNM gained control of much of northwest Somalia, but the government of dictator Mohammed Siyad Barre retained control of the two largest cities in the north until early 1991.

During 1990, several other rebel groups gained ground in central and southern Somalia. That December, they launched an offensive against Barre. Mogadishu became a battlefield, with both sides (but especially government forces, which had greater firepower) indiscriminately shelling the city. All foreigners were evacuated; most of the city's residents fled, either to other areas of Somalia or to Ethiopia or Kenya; and armed men associated with all factions in the conflict—and many not associated with any faction—went on a rampage, killing, looting, and raping.

On January 27, Barre and the troops that remained loyal to him were forced to flee Mogadishu, leaving the city in the hands of the United Somali Congress (USC), a rebel group that draws its support from the most populous clan in the Mogadishu area, the Hawiye clan. Barre retreated to his home area near the Ethiopian border, where he and his followers remained at the end of the year. The USC appointed an interim president, Ali Mahdi Mohamed, but his authority was rejected by the SNM and the rebel groups that gained control of other regions of the country.

The USC could not establish order in Mogadishu. There was a split between the two main USC leaders, Interim President Ali Mahdi, and the general who led the USC attack against Barre, Mohamed Farah Aideed. Each man had the support of a different sub-clan of the Hawiye clan.

With no one clearly in power, Mogadishu slid into anarchy. Throughout February and March, armed men continued to loot and kill, and basic services were not restored. Because of the insecurity in the city, most foreign relief groups, including UN agencies, stayed out. The only medical or relief aid available to Mogadishu's residents came from SOS Children's Village, which converted its orphanage to a hospital and provided medical care throughout the conflict. Medecins sans frontieres (MSF-Holland), the first relief group to return to Mogadishu after the heavy January fighting, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the Save the Children Fund (UK). Although the situation calmed down beginning in April, no mass food distribution program could be carried out because of continued insecurity.

In other regions of the country, fighting continued between government troops and rebels for several months after Barre's ouster from Mogadishu. Somalis fled from those areas also, as did most of the rest of the Ethiopian refugees who remained in Somalia. Only some 35,000 Ethiopians who were trapped at Qoryoley refugee camp or who fled from various camps to Mogadishu expecting to find help there stayed in Somalia. Their situation is said to be even worse than that of Somali civilians trapped in conflict areas, since they are outside the informal, clan-based food distribution network that exists in Somalia. What was once one of Africa's largest—though the number was disputed—refugee populations, officially more than 800,000 during much of the 1980s (though in reality no more than 350,000 by the late 1980s), is virtually gone.

The USC gained control of Kismayo, in southern Somalia, in March 1991. That led to the displacement of most of that city's residents, who had supported another rebel group associated with their clan. Some fled by boat to Kenya (in March, one boat carrying fleeing Somalis sank off the Kenyan coast, killing 130); tens of thousands of others crossed into Kenya by land; and as many as 60,000 camped out near Doble, a small town on the Somali side of the Kenya/Somalia border (it is unclear whether they did so because the Kenyan authorities prevented them from entering or because they were waiting to see what would happen in Kismayo). All but 4,000 to 6,000 of those at Doble returned to Kismayo by November.

Also after Barre's fall, the SNM gained control of the entire northwest region. In late May, following a meeting between the SNM leadership and members of the various clans in northern Somalia, the SNM declared northwest Somalia independent, naming the country the Somaliland Republic. Although Somaliland had not been recognized by any government as of the end of 1991, various UN agencies were operating there, and more than 100,000 northern Somali refugees who had fled to Ethiopia in 1988 returned home. Two of the main deterrents to an even greater level of repatriation in 1991 were the hundreds of thousands of mines planted by Barre soldiers, particularly in the largest city, Hargeisa, and also the fact that—due to a variety of constraints, real and perceived—UNHCR was slow in drafting and implementing a repatriation plan. Although the situation in Somaliland was much calmer than that in the south, there were clashes between two clans, security problems in the port city of Berbera, and threats against staff of CARE, the relief group responsible for coordinating distribution of food aid in Somaliland.

Feeding center in Mogadishu, Somalia. Following the ouster of dictator Siyad Barre in January 1991, Mogadishu was propelled into year-long anarchy as rival clans battled for power at the expense of the city's civilian population. USCR/H. Ruiz

In April and May 1991, USCR visited Mogadishu and northern Somalia. In testimony before the Senate African Affairs Subcommittee on May 14, 1991, USCR staff said, "Every day the existing food stocks grow smaller. The number of people in need grows larger. . . . Security could also deteriorate if those with guns hold onto them to guarantee their own food supplies. There is still time to avert a catastrophe in both southern and northern Somalia. But action is required now."

But the international presence in Mogadishu remained small, and the split between Ali Mahdi and Aideed broke into open, intra-clan warfare. Heavy fighting flared up in June, and again in September. More than 1,000 were killed in just 4 days of fighting in early September. The UN, which had reestablished a small presence in Mogadishu in August, again departed when five local staff members were beaten (two critically injured) during the September fighting.

In mid-November, fighting escalated yet again. Aideed's forces ousted Ali Mahdi from his stronghold in central Mogadishu, and once again indiscriminate shelling ravaged the city and its residents. Food distribution, which had finally begun in early October, was suspended. More than 9,000 people were killed or wounded in November and December, mostly women and children hit by shelling. SCF reported that on one day 70 percent of the operations they carried out were on children. A Belgian ICRC relief worker was killed in Mogadishu in December. Once again, hundreds of thousands of Mogadishu's residents fled the city.

A U.S. State Department official described the situation in Mogadishu as "the most acute humanitarian crisis in the world." In a letter to Secretary of State James D. Baker, USCR urged him "to take a lead in mounting an international effort to bring warring factions to the negotiating table."

In December, an estimated 716,200 Somalis were in exile in neighboring countries: Ethiopia, 519,000 (of whom 200,000 entered from Somalia between December 1990 and early 1991); Djibouti, 105,000; Kenya, 92,200. Hundreds of thousands more were internally displaced and living in difficult circumstances. An ICRC nutritional survey carried out in areas of central Somalia where many displaced are located found a malnutrition rate of 46 percent. Fighting continued in Mogadishu, killing or injuring dozens more each day. And there was no solution in sight to what the ICRC called "one of the worst wars we have known, at least in this century."

South Africa

The dramatic—though insufficient—changes in the South African political scene that began in 1990 continued throughout 1991, opening the way for South African refugees to repatriate. However, for Mozambican refugees in South Africa, little changed.

South African Refugees Repatriate

On December 11, 1991, 105 South African exiles repatriated with UNHCR assistance. Their historic return home under UNHCR auspices marked the beginning of an official repatriation program agreed to by UNHCR, the South African government, the African National Congress (ANC), other black South African political groups, and South African religious groups.

UNHCR expects to assist 30,000 of the estimated 40,000 South African refugees living throughout southern Africa. Included in the 30,000 figure are 400 who returned home under the UNHCR program in December, 7,000 South Africans who returned to South Africa prior to the implementation of the agreement and who require reintegration assistance, and an estimated 23,000 South Africans in neighboring countries who will require both transportation to South Africa and reintegration assistance upon their return. Some observers believe that the number of South African refugees who will choose to repatriate within the UNHCR time-frame will be less than 30,000.

Assistance to the returnees is being channeled through a National Coordinating Committee for the Repatriation of South African Exiles (NCCR), composed of liberation movements, church organizations, and relief groups.

UNHCR anticipates that all the exiles will return home by April 1992, and be reintegrated by October 1992. The agency has appealed to the international community for more than $28 million to finance the repatriation exercise.

The agreement that paved the way for the first UNHCR-assisted repatriation was signed on September 4, 1991, following sixteen months of negotiations and confusion (for many months, both South Africa and the ANC rejected a UNHCR role in the repatriation process, particularly inside South Africa). UNHCR's participation represents the first direct involvement of a UN agency in South Africa in more than 20 years. According to a September 1991 USCR report on the repatriation, *UNHCR Enters South Africa: A Constrained Mandate*, as part of the agreement, South Africa extended a general amnesty to all exiles, thousands of whom are members of the ANC's military wing, with the exception of those who committed serious common crimes. The South African government pledged to allow the amnestied refugees to return "without risk of arrest, detention, [or] imprisonment."

While many refugee advocates welcomed the agreement, they criticized some aspects of it. For example, UNHCR yielded to South Africa's refusal to allow the agency to carry out its protection and assistance mandate on behalf of Mozambican refugees in South Africa. Also, a one-year time frame for implementation and a relatively small staffing level could prevent UNHCR from providing returnees with adequate protection and from guaranteeing the integrity of the assistance program implemented by the NCCR.

Even before the repatriation agreement was signed in September, a number of South African exiles, including ANC officials, returned to South Africa. On March 7, a group of 90 ANC members repatriated from Zambia, the first large contingent to do so (a number of individual ANC-affiliated exiles returned in 1991). Their return was made possible by political changes that began in South Africa in 1990. In February of that year, the ANC was legalized, and well-known ANC official Nelson Mandela was freed from prison. The South African government also repealed some, though not all, of the legislation that shaped the apartheid system of racial segregation.

In 1991, the South African government, the ANC, and other black political groups continued to move—gingerly, in the case of the government—towards an end to apartheid and eventual majority rule, but white opposition to the process increased substantially during the year. On September 14, ten days after the repatriation agreement was signed, some 50 South African organizations signed a National Peace Accord, which is a blueprint for ending apartheid and achieving majority rule. The accord establishes codes of conduct for police, government agencies, and political parties.

Despite the political progess that was achieved in 1991, politically motivated violence among rival black political groups, in some cases ethnically based, continued to soar. That violence left thousands dead or injured during 1991. In the month following the signing of the national peace accord, more than 100 South Africans died as a result of political violence.

Mozambican Refugees Mozambicans have entered South Africa in search of work for many decades. An estimated 50,000 Mozambicans work legally in South Africa, primarily in diamond mines. But more than 200,000 others may have entered South Africa partly in search of work but also to escape the violence and terrorization of civilians in Mozambique. They are mostly concentrated in the KaNgwane and Gazankulu "homelands", where they receive only limited assistance, mostly from private relief groups and the ICRC.

The South African government regards all Mozambicans who do not have work permits as "illegal aliens" subject to deportation. Devoid of any legal protections, Mozambican refugees are vulnerable in a number of ways: to assault by border guards; to injury from a 70 kilometer electrified border fence (now operated at nonlethal levels); to capture and detention by police and army officers lasting into months; to summary deportations (averaging roughly 3,000 per month) by locally appointed "passport control officers"; to exploitation as cheap labor on in the eastern Transvaal that has amounted to conditions of slavery (South African press reports in late 1990 denounced a "slave trade" in Mozambican refugees); and to theft and forcible conscription by the guerrillas of the Mozambican National Resistance insurgency or even Mozambique government forces, each of which is active in the border areas.

In October, South Africa enacted new legislation, the Aliens Control Act, that gives immigration authorities even more power to seek out and deport Mozambican refugees. Immigration officers can now enter private premises to search for refugees without legal documentation and can jail anyone harboring them.

Sudan

For more than 20 years, Sudan has been a major refugee-hosting country. In recent years, it has also been a refugee-producing country, though that changed somewhat in 1991 when most of the Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia returned home prematurely due to political developments in Ethiopia. Civil war, drought, and government policies have left millions of Sudanese displaced and/or at risk of famine.

Internally Displaced Sudanese Some 4.75 million Sudanese, mostly southern Sudanese, are internally displaced. As many as 1.8 million of them are living in and around Khartoum, the Sudanese capital, in squalid shantytowns often built atop garbage dumps. They are often harassed by the authorities, and receive virtually no assistance. The remainder of the displaced are located mainly in the south and in the so-called transitional zone between the north and the south.

The displaced have been uprooted from their homes primarily as a result of the civil war between the military forces of the Khartoum government, seen as representing the interests of the "arabized", Muslim population of the north, and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), backed primarily by African southern Sudanese who are mostly Christians or followers of traditional religions.

For years, successive Sudanese governments have sought to remove the displaced from the Khartoum area. Those efforts increased in 1991. On April 22, the government announced that it would relocate 800,000 people from Khartoum by the end of the year (it only actually relocated a relatively small percentage of that number). Between April and May, the UN said that the government forcibly relocated some 9,000 people. Between June and August, the government destroyed the homes of another 6,000 displaced families, whom it then moved to a totally unsuitable site well outside the city. In November and December, the government again ordered the bulldozing of various camps for the displaced and removed the camps residents at gunpoint. On December 22, an estimated 15 residents of the Dar-es-Salam displaced camp were killed (one newspaper account said as many as 47 were shot dead) and another 80 wounded while trying to resist the destruction of their homes.

The Khartoum government has placed many of those it has forcibly displaced in sites with no facilities. It has also prevented private relief agencies from setting up clinics or feeding centers to aid the displaced at these new sites, at times threatening the relief groups. The government has moved other displaced to agricultural sites where they essentially live as forced laborers.

A split in the SPLA ranks in August 1991 led to fighting between the main SPLA force and the breakaway faction, which resulted in further displacement.

In late November, there was major confrontation between the two groups near Bor, a southern Sudanese town where members of the breakaway group reportedly massacred 5,000 civilians. As many as 250,000 people fled the fighting in Bor and neighboring Kongor districts (flooding in the region also contributed to their flight). The two SPLA factions declared a cease-fire shortly after the fighting in Bor, but it was soon broken.

In late December, the UN reported that at Mongalla, a town to which many of those displaced by the fighting had fled, 40 percent of all children were seriously malnourished. The Sudanese air force bombed Mongalla twice in the last week of December.

In early 1991, the U.S. State Department reported that up to nine million people, more than a third of the total Sudanese total population, needed food assistance. Although drought is a major cause of the food shortage in Sudan, particularly in the northern half of the country, the civil war has contributed significantly to the problem.

A March 1991 USCR Issue Brief, *War and Famine in the Sudan*, addresses the complex situation linking drought, war, Sudanese government policy, and international aid.

In recent years, the Khartoum government has been strongly criticized for blocking food aid to the Sudanese people, often denying that a problem even existed. In February, Sudanese leader Omer al-Bashir said that relief groups seeking to carry out relief efforts were "defaming Sudan by begging on behalf of the Sudanese people," and added, "We must get rid of all these organizations."

USCR visited southern Sudan in early May. By mid-May, USCR had testified before the U.S. Senate's Subcommittee on African Affairs, calling for the United States to use all its assets, including military logistical support remaining in the Middle East following the crisis in Kuwait, to "jump start the relief effort, if the cooperation of Khartoum can be achieved." In late May, USCR testified before the Subcommittee on Africa of the U.S. House of Representatives, in support of legislation appropriating funds for both refugee assistance and food aid in the Horn of Africa.

Members and staff of the House Select Committee on Hunger visited the Horn of Africa, including camps for displaced southern Sudanese in and around Khartoum, in August/September. They found that donors and relief groups faced "immense difficulties" working in Sudan, and that many were pulling out of Sudan "because of the government's hostility to relief efforts."

Some observers have accused the Sudanese government of manipulating the needs of hungry Sudanese to its benefit by consistently refusing to allow relief efforts to proceed during the dry season, when transporting food is less costly, then agreeing to allow them when the rainy season is imminent. At that time, these observers say, transportation costs rise substantially, which benefits Sudanese merchants, particularly those with ties to the government.

In September, the UN said that 8.7 million people, including refugees and returnees, still needed food aid, and that UN agencies were attempting to assist 4.5 million of them. Because of the many difficulties in reaching those in need (including an inadequate donor response: as of September 29, only 58 percent of food aid requested had been pledged), at the end of 1991 many Sudanese remained at risk. In December, the State Department said that in Darfur Province, in western Sudan, "High rates of malnutrition are still being reported … [and] tens of thousands of people are thought to have already died, and many more are at risk."

Ethiopian Refugees At the end of 1990, UNHCR estimated that there were 700,000 Ethiopian and 26,500 other refugees living in Sudan. Only 370,000 of the Ethiopian refugees received UNHCR assistance. The remainder were said to be spontaneously settled and self-sufficient in villages near the Ethiopian border.

While most of the assisted and unassisted refugees live in reception centers or rural areas, some live in cities and towns, including Khartoum. According to the U.S. State Department, urban refugees are often harassed and beaten by police who also demand bribes for work permits and food-ration cards. They have no recourse to the legal system when police attack them.

The political upheaval in Ethiopia in May 1991 directly affected the refugee situation in Sudan. More than 50,000 Ethiopian soldiers (most of whom had been based in Eritrea) and their dependents fled to Sudan following the ouster of Mengistu Haile Mariam. The former soldiers, many of whom arrived in poor condition, entered the Kassala area of eastern Sudan. The Sudan government insisted that they numbered more than 160,000, and sought aid for that number. As virtually all of them were eager to go home, UNHCR mounted an airlift—the largest in the agency's history—to return them to Addis Ababa. By November 21, when the airlift ended, 50,945 ex-soldiers and dependents had repatriated.

The capture of all of Eritrea by the forces of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) following Mengistu's ouster opened the way for the repatriation of Eritrean refugees, who represent a majority of the 370,000 assisted Ethiopian refugees in Sudan (most of the other Ethiopian refugees are Tigrayan, with smaller numbers of Oromos, Amharas, and other ethnic groups). In 1991, some 10,000 Eritreans returned by their own means. UNHCR has formulated a plan to repatriate another 250,000 Eritreans beginning in January 1992. Little has been said about whether the 330,000 Ethiopian refugees (presumably also mostly Eritrean and Tigrayan) who are supposedly living in Sudan without UNHCR assistance are likely to repatriate, or who would assist them if they did.

Sudanese Refugees Mengistu's fall also resulted in the hasty return of some 270,000 Sudanese refugees from Ethiopia to southern Sudan. Prior to May, UNHCR estimated that some 398,000 Sudanese refugees (all from southern Sudan) were living in Ethiopia (a figure that now seems high, as only some 15,000 Sudanese remain in Ethiopia and approximately 270,000 returned to Sudan). The refugees fled back to Sudan due to fighting in the region where they were living, including an attack on one of the refugee camps, and because they feared the new government in Ethiopia (see Ethiopia).

The returnees' flight began in mid-May and continued through June. Some of the returnees were reportedly attacked on the Ethiopian side of the border, and the Sudanese air force bombed them several times after they crossed the border. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, 30 returnees were killed in one such bombing near Nasir on May 14, and one returnee was killed at Jokou on May 31.

The massive, sudden returnee influx into a remote area created a major emergency. Initially, no food, shelter, or health care existed for the returnees. UN relief personnel who went to Nasir sent back an urgent appeal: "Food situation desperate. Please organize air drop as there is no food, repeat, no food."

Providing relief to the returnees, some of whom returned to their home areas but most of whom remained displaced at sites along the Sudan/Ethiopia border, proved difficult. The rains made roads to the area impassable, and although an airlift was mounted, it did not begin until June 26, six weeks after the influx began. Other food reached Nasir by barge. Although the emergency later eased, adequate amounts of food never reached the area, and in December, the U.S. State Department reported, "the nutritional rate of the returnee population is declining, and many deaths have occurred."

Among the returnees were thousands of unaccompanied teenage boys who had been living at the Fugnido refugee camp in Ethiopia. In December, 32.4 percent of the unaccompanied minors at Nasir were reportedly severely malnourished.

An estimated 202,500 Sudanese refugees remain in neighboring countries (Zaire, 104,000; Uganda, 75,500; Ethiopia, 15,000; Central African Republic, 8,000).

Other Refugees Sudan continues to host some 20,000 Chadian refugees. They live in Darfur Province, which faced both civil conflict and drought in 1991. Also, some 2,700 Ugandan and 4,500 Zairean refugees remain in Sudan. Ugandan refugees in Sudan numbered more than 250,000 in the 1970s, but most repatriated after political changes in Uganda in 1986. The remaining Ugandan refugees are located in the government-held city of Juba in southern Sudan.

(In January 1992, UNHCR began a repatriation program for the remaining Ugandan refugees in Sudan. The agency expected to complete the repatriation by February 10, 1992.)

Mozambican refugee girl in Zimbabwe, one of more than 1.48 million Mozambican refugees in southern Africa. USCR/H. Ruiz

Tanzania

Tanzania hosts an estimated 251,000 refugees from Burundi, Rwanda, Mozambique, Zaire, and South Africa. Of these, an estimated 131,000 are ethnic Hutus from Burundi, many of whom first fled following a 1972 massacre in Burundi of more than 100,000 Hutus (others have fled following other episodes of violent inter-ethnic strife between Hutus and ethnic Tutsis, a minority group that dominates the Burundian government). The Burundian refugees mostly live in well-established settlements in western Tanzania. During 1991, some 18,000 ethnic Hutus voluntarily repatriated to Burundi. Another 6,000 Hutus whose status in Burundi was not clear were involuntarily returned to Burundi in 1991.

In July, the Tanzanian authorities released 14 Burundian refugees who had been in detention since March 1989, accused of plotting clandestine activities against the government of Burundi. The 14 were sent to live at a Mozambican refugee settlement in southern Tanzania, most likely to keep them away from other Burundian refugees. The group's leader died in detention in August 1990.

There are 72,000 refugees from Mozambique settled in southern Tanzania. They receive some assistance but are at least partly self-sufficient.

Tanzania also hosts 22,300 Rwandese refugees, 16,000 Zaireans, as many as 9,600 South Africans, and 200 refugees of various nationalities. Some 400 South Africans repatriated in early December of 1991 under a UNHCR-sponsored program. Most of the remaining South Africans are expected to repatriate with UNHCR assistance.

Togo

In late 1991, an attempt by members of the military to regain lost influence resulted in a political crisis that led thousands of Togolese to flee to neighboring Ghana and Benin. In early December, soldiers faithful to the Togolese president, Gen. Gnassingbe Eyadema, took captive the country's reformist prime minister, who since a mid-1991 National Conference had been the designated head of government and leader of the military. At least 17 people, mostly soldiers loyal to the prime minister, were killed in an attack on the government palace. More than one hundred other Togolese were killed and one thousand injured in attacks on demonstrators by soldiers and vigilante groups in the months prior to the National Conference.

Some 1,500 to 2,000 Togolese fled to Ghana, and as many as 15,000 fled to Benin as a result of the crisis. By the end of December, most of those who fled to Ghana returned home voluntarily. Those in Benin are expected to repatriate in early 1992.

Uganda

The Rwandese are the largest refugee group in Uganda. From 1959 to 1964, between 50,000 and 70,000 Rwandese fled to Uganda. Although a majority of the current Rwandese population of 207,000 were born in Uganda, Ugandan authorities still consider them refugees. Only 87,000 of the Rwandese still receive UNHCR assistance. The remainder are self-settled.

In October 1990, a rebel group comprised mostly of Rwandese exiles living in Uganda (many of them former soldiers and officers in the Ugandan military) invaded Rwanda. The Rwandese government accused the Ugandan authorities of backing the rebels, a claim Uganda denied. The invasion and its roots in the refugee population of Uganda are documented in the February 1991 USCR Issue Paper, *Exile from Rwanda: Background to an Invasion*. An estimated 16,000 new Rwandese refugees entered Uganda after the invasion, but 10,000 of them later returned to Rwanda.

The Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), as the rebels are known, scored some initial successes, but within a few weeks the Rwandese military, with substantial assistance and supplies from Zaire, France, and Belgium, turned back the invading rebels. The RPF then turned to guerrilla warfare.

In *Exile from Rwanda*, USCR recommended a ceasefire, followed by convening, under Organization of African Unity auspicies, of a regional conference of governments, refugee representatives, and UNHCR to resolve the long-standing problem of Rwandese refugees in neighboring countries. On March 29, 1991, the Rwandese government and the RPF declared a cease-fire, but it was broken almost immediately. The RPF renounced the cease-fire on June 12, accusing the Rwandese government of repeated attacks on rebel positions. Fighting continued along the Ugandan/Rwandese border throughout 1991. The Rwandese government continued to blame Uganda for the rebel attacks.

Besides Rwandese refugees, Uganda hosts refugees from Sudan (75,500, of whom some 6,100 arrived in Uganda in October and November, 1991), South Africa (2,000), Zaire (600), and various other countries (350).

Continuing rebel activity and indiscipline in the ranks of both rebels and government soldiers have led to further internal displacement and human rights abuses in various areas of Uganda, particularly in the north. Battles between the Ugandan military and rebels belonging to the United Democratic Christian Army (UDCA) have left thousands dead or injured. Among the human rights abuses reported are abductions, forced conscriptions, killings, mutilations, and rapes. Two other rebel groups, the Uganda People's Army (UPA) and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU), are fighting against the army in eastern and western Uganda respectively. According to press reports, as many as 5,000 ethnic Teso people have been killed in eastern Uganda in connection with the armed conflict in that region.

Zaire

During 1991, an estimated 72,000 southern Sudanese, fleeing continued fighting in Sudan, entered Zaire. In November, following civil unrest in Burundi, some 35,000 Burundian refugees entered Zaire's southern Kivu region.

Also during 1991, some 15,000 of the 325,000 Angolans living in Zaire repatriated to Angola. Their return home was precipitated by concern about unrest in Zaire associated with opposition efforts to bring an end to the rule of Zairean strongman Mobutu Sese Seko.

Mobutu, in power for 26 years, faced new challenges to continued rule. After announcing democratic reforms in April 1990, the events of 1991 far outpaced what he would easily permit. By the end of 1991, some 300 political parties had registered for the three-party elections he proposed. The opposition pressured Mobutu into accepting a National Conference, which finally convened in August. However, plagued by boycotts and suspicion of the government's role in rules manipulation, the conference never progressed beyond preliminary stages.

With inflation at an annual rate of 3,000 percent and the economy continuing its downward spiral, an increasing number of Zaireans were calling into question Mobutu's right to govern. In September, soldiers angry over low pay went on a rampage in the capital, Kinshasa, looting stores and destroying property. Similar events took place in other cities, including Kananga, Kitwit, and Kamina. The rioting led to 250 deaths and more than 1,500 injuries. The crisis brought on evacuation of 20,000 foreigners, mostly European and American, and deployment of French and Belgian troops to protect them.

After reluctantly appointing opposition figure Etienne Tshisekedi Prime Minister, Mobutu removed him only two days later. After a second short-lived Prime Minister was disposed of, Nguza Karl-I-Bond was then appointed by Mobutu to the vacant position. By December, the National Conference was again convened, and elected as its president Archbishop Monsengo Pasinya. However, opposition leaders continued to express doubts about Mobutu's willingness to permit truly democratic reform.

It remains unclear what impact further unrest would have on the refugee situation in Zaire and neighboring countries. The year-end disturbances in Zaire reportedly led a small number of Zaireans to flee to Angola. If such disturbances were to continue or intensify, the potential for creation of a new refugee population would, perhaps, be great. Any unrest in Zaire would also be likely to affect the UNHCR-sponsored repatriation, planned for 1992, of Angolans currently in Zaire.

A majority of the 310,000 Angolan refugees remaining in Zaire have been in the country for more than twenty years. They are largely socially integrated and economically self-sufficient. However, some 80,000 of the Angolans have entered since 1985 due to the war between the Angolan government and UNITA, and to food shortages in Angola. Most from this group live in sparsely populated regions of southern Zaire, particularly the Shaba region, and in the Bas Zaire and Bandundu regions.

Besides 310,000 Angolans, 104,000 Sudanese, and 45,000 Burundians, Zaire hosts some 10,000 Ugandan refugees and 1,300 refugees of various nationalities.

Zimbabwe

There are more than 198,500 refugees living in Zimbabwe. That figure includes 97,000 Mozambicans living in refugee camps, and 100,000 Mozambicans residing outside the camps. An estimated 1,000 South Africans and 500 refugees of other nationalities also live in Zimbabwe.

The Zimbabwean authorities provide a variety of commendable social services to the camp residents, but the camps are surrounded by intimidating high fences—unusual in Africa—that the government says were built to protect the refugees (the refugees are allowed free movement in and out of the camps). Refugees are forbidden to work, and Zimbabwean security forces round up refugees attempting to work as low-paid contract laborers on large farms. The refugees' presence is a source of some domestic political problems for the Zimbabwean government because of concern in the region where the refugees are located that refugees may take land and jobs from local people.

Although Zimbabwe has given refuge to a large number of Mozambican refugees, it has, over the years, consistently forcibly repatriated some Mozambican refugees or pushed back asylum seekers at the border. Some observers believe that the pushbacks are not necessarily official government policy, but that they are carried out by local military units concerned about infiltration into Zimbabwe by members of the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) guerrilla group. According to the U.S. State Department, in 1991 Zimbabwe closed some sections of its borders and forcibly repatriated or pushed back some 2,000 Mozambicans.

EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Australia

In mid-January 1991, the daughter of a cattle rancher came across 37 Chinese boat people staggering down a dusty road in Australia's isolated and inhospitable northwest. The group had washed up two weeks before in crocodile-infested swamps 160 miles from the nearest port. They trekked into the desert, living on snakes and rainfall until they were rescued.

In all, 56 Chinese survived the ordeal. They were placed in a Darwin detention center pending a full review of their refugee applications.

Between March and May, another 5 "unauthorized boat arrivals" were recorded in Australia, totalling about 160 people, including 96 Cambodians, 25 Vietnamese, and about 35 Chinese.

Since December 1990, Australia has been operating a new, two-tier system of status determination for asylum seekers. Those who are found to be refugees or of special humanitarian concern are eligible for a 4-year temporary residence permit (rather than permanent status).

From January to December, out of a total of 1,320 applications, 107, or about 8 percent, were approved and 1,213 were rejected. At the end of December 1991, Australia's asylum backlog stood at 23,000, of which 72 percent were from the People's Republic of China. In its fiscal year 1990–91, which ended in June 1991, Australia admitted 7,745 people under the humanitarian component of its migration program (overall immigration was 123,600 in the same period). Within this component, which includes refugee and special humanitarian status, 3,136 Vietnamese, 1,460 Salvadorans, 1,147 Lebanese, 338 Iranians, 301 Laotians, 266 Afghans, and 111 Ethiopians were admitted.

In 1991–92, Australia allocated 12,000 visas for refugee and humanitarian admissions. Of these, 4,700 visas were allocated by region, with 2,000 for Indochinese, 1,500 for the Middle East, 1,000 for Latin America (mostly Salvadorans), and 270 for Africa. Another 6,300 visas have been allocated for a new Special Assistance Program for persons of concern to Australia who do not fit refugee or other humanitarian categories.

Uprooted by fighting and unable to go home for fear of banditry and mines, 180,000 people remained displaced inside Cambodia at the end of 1991. Sara Say

Burma (Myanmar)

Counting recent influxes into Thailand, Bangladesh, China, and India, a conservative estimate puts the number of Burmese forced out of their country by persecution and civil war at more than 110,000 people at the end of 1991. This includes 70,000 refugees in Thailand of various backgrounds and ethnicities, 30,000 Burmese Muslims (or Rohingyas) in Bangladesh, 10,000 Kachins in China, and more than 2,000 refugees in India.

Burma (now renamed Myanmar) is under the control of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), a military dictatorship that has stifled all democratic dissent, brutalized political opponents and ethnic minorities, and refused to hand over power to a civilian government duly elected in May 1990.

Throughout 1991, the Burmese army engaged in what could only be called ethnic genocide. The intent, many suspected, was not only to wipe out the last vestiges of resistance on the borders but to draw popular attention in Rangoon away from the pro-democracy movement and its internationally acknowledged leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, whose nonviolent struggle for human rights in the face of incessant harassment and long-term house arrest won her the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize.

In December 1991, USCR visited Mon and Karen refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese border. Relief workers and refugees uniformly described the situation inside Burma as exceedingly desperate. The Burmese army was systematically destroying small villages in both Karen and Mon areas, conscripting children, forcing thousands of ethnic men and women into porterage, and uprooting tens of thousands more. At least 80,000 Karen are displaced inside Burma. Meanwhile, the Thai government continued to deport vulnerable populations back to Burma.

In late May 1991, Thai authorities announced that all Burmese "illegal immigrants" in Tak Province must leave the country by the end of the month or face deportation. Approximately 200 Burmese "illegal workers" were handed over to Burmese authorities in Myawaddy in early June.

In August, local officials in Sangklaburi district ordered all Burmese ethnic minorities in the area—including an estimated 15,000 Mon and Karen living in refugee camps—to demonstrate legal residence or face deportation to Burma.

Thai authorities insist they have adopted a "live and let live" approach to the Burmese students, then persist in their round-ups, detentions, and forced repatriations.

In addition to the ethnic minority groups and student activists, an estimated 160,000 other Burmese are living in Thailand without documentation. Many are engaged in cross-border trade or have crossed into Thailand seeking temporary employment, but some have fled the risk of forced conscription, porterage, or other abuse at the hands of the Burmese authorities.

Since 1988, Thai authorities have repatriated thousands of Burmese "illegal immigrants," who face, at minimum, stiff fines under Burma's Immigration and Manpower Act and six-month prison terms if they cannot pay. Ethnic minorities (including Arakanese and other so-called "Indian" Burmese who are numerous in Thailand) and suspected political activists face great risk of interrogation, detention, torture, and ill-treatment.

At the end of 1991, there were about 900 Burmese "illegal immigrants" in Thailand's Suan Phlu detention center, all of whom faced deportation to Burma.

In early 1991, the Burmese army launched another campaign against the Muslim minority in Arakan State—there have been 17 since 1948. By August 1991, Burmese refugees in Bangladesh numbered 16,000. At the end of 1991, an estimated 30,000 Rohingyas were in Bangladesh.

In late January 1992, the Burmese army reportedly rounded up about 3,000 Rohingya youths on suspicion of links to Arakanese separatist movements and jammed them into 10 storehouses. Up to 700 may have suffocated to death.

About 10,000 Kachin refugees have fled to China's Yunnan Province, and 500,000 are internally displaced in Kachin State. Kachin refugees also gave accounts of numerous Burmese army abuses, including rampant destruction of crops and villages, forced porterage, torture, rapes, and executions.

About 1,400 Nagas, an ethnic minority group living across the border from the Indian states of Mizoram and Manipur, fled into India in December, reporting a crackdown by the Burmese military.

Cambodia (Kampuchea)

On October 23, 1991, the four contending factions in Cambodia's 13-year civil war agreed to an ambitious plan for peace, which put the administration of the country into the hands of the United Nations, pending national elections tentatively scheduled for April 1993.

The UN settlement places administrative responsibility for the country in the hands of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia until free and fair elections can be held. They are tentatively scheduled for April 1993. In the meantime, the "sovereignty, independence, and unity of Cambodia" will reside in a 12-member Supreme National Council, comprising all four political factions and headed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

But before elections can be held, the peace must be secured, troops disarmed, prisoners of war released, and 370,000 Cambodian refugees in Thailand must have a chance to return and resettle safely.

Annex 4 of the Paris settlement states, among other things, that "repatriation of Cambodian refugees and displaced persons should be voluntary and their decision should be taken in full possession of the facts. Choice of destination within Cambodia should be that of the individual. The unity of the family must be preserved."

UNHCR initially estimated that it would need $109 million for the voluntary repatriation program, scheduled to begin in April 1992 and to be completed within six months. The primary objective was to safely transport an estimated 250,000 refugees from Thailand to six reception centers in Cambodia and thence to their village of destination. It was believed that about 100,000 Cambodian refugees would repatriate spontaneously.

A UNHCR registration conducted in the border camps at the end of 1991, however, forced the agency to revise its figures. The registration showed a total population of nearly 370,000, of whom 90 percent, or about 330,000, expressed a wish to return under UN auspices, according to a UNHCR report issued on January 22.

UNHCR estimated it would take nine months, rather than six, to transport this much larger number of people from Thailand to Cambodia.

In addition to the logistical and budgetary obstacles, the repatriation effort will have to contend with mines, disease, banditry, and continued instability in Cambodia.

A survey of the Cambodian camps conducted by the Ford Foundation in 1990 showed that the border population was primarily from a farming background. About 60 percent came from the four western border provinces of Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Siem Reap, and Pursat. The latest UNHCR registration of the border camps showed that 57.3 percent of the returnees, about 190,000 people, want to repatriate to Battambang Province alone.

The UNHCR plan is to give two hectares of farmland to each family of returnees, which averages 4.4 persons. In November and December of 1991, a UNHCR land-identification mission identified 240,000 hectares of "potentially available arable land" in the four western provinces favored by returnees. Simultaneously, a team of de-mining experts under contract to UNHCR surveyed one-fourth of this identified area. Of the 60,000 hectares surveyed, the London-based HALO Trust concluded that half were "probably not mined." Another 28,800 hectares were "probably mined," and 11,200 hectares were "probably heavily mined."

At least 36,000 people have lost one or more limbs to a land mine in Cambodia, including 6,000 people in 1990 alone. HALO Trust estimated that there may be 400,000 mines in the western provinces.

In addition to mines, returnees also face the risks of malaria and waterborne diseases. Children under the age of five are particularly vulnerable, having drunk only chlorinated water in the refugee camps.

New outbreaks of political violence also hampered repatriation planning and clouded the prospects for peace. Several protest demonstrations in Phnom Penh—

"They Probably Thought I Was a Refugee"

Raci Say

(Raci Say is an administrative assistant with the U.S. Committee for Refugees. In December, she went to Site 2, a Cambodian refugee camp in Thailand, to teach a pilot class for the refugees there on human rights. The following are excerpts from her journal.) Photo Credit: Kassie Neou

This trip is a joint project of the U.S. Committee for Refugees and the Cambodia Documentation Commission to promote human rights for Cambodians. My assignment is to train refugees at the Thai border and to test out a pilot course on Human Rights developed and translated into Khmer by the Cambodia Documentation Commission, a private, nonpartisan agency that documents human rights violations in Cambodia.

The lesson plan covers the causes and effects of human rights violations on the individual and society; the relationship of civil, political, and social and economic rights; and the provisions in constitutional and international law for protecting human rights.

As I began to think about this trip, memories of my experience as a refugee in Thailand came back into my mind. I'm very excited that after 11 years, I have a chance to go back and work with my lovely people, with whom I shared the tragedy of living through Pol Pot's murderous time. I have tried very hard to forget those times, so that I could regain my health, but it is impossible. The images come as clearly as if they are happening right now. I have learned that the image of persecution never fades away.

December 9: This morning, on our way to Site 2, where we will teach our classes, we drove by Khao I Dang refugee camp where I stayed for seven months before I was accepted for resettlement in the United States. Filled with old memories of how I was treated years ago during Pol Pot, then the Heng Samrin regime, as a refugee in Khao I Dang, and as a newly resettled refugee in the United States, I almost broke into tears. Site 2 itself, at the border with Cambodia, is an enormous, temporary home to 140,000 Cambodian refugees. There are so many children here. Most of them have no shoes, their shirts with only a few buttons. It was very hard to control my emotions when I saw these refugee children and compared them with my kids in the United States. While I was in very deep thought, my friend Samnang said to me, "This is really a world of children."

I was shocked when I went into the classroom today and saw thirty men and only two women. Women make up the majority of the population in this camp. After class, I talked with the two women, asking them why others hadn't attended. They told me that others wanted to come, but felt they might not be qualified. I asked them to help get more, and they said they would.

On the first day, very few people spoke up. They were skeptical about what we had to say. After we talked about our goals and our feelings, they began to talk, though still in a reserved way. Most of them have lost their immediate family. They need somebody they can trust and depend on. And that's not abnormal. Nobody knows how broken are the hearts of the Cambodian survivors more than the Cambodians themselves who have passed through the horrible time.

When I first came to the camps, I was also very reserved because in the communist time I had to be very cautious about the people I talked to. The more silent you could be, the safer you were. Keeping myself from talking became my instinct. There were some subjects that I was not supposed to talk about at all, and I had to train my mind to seal off information like my family's background, or my father's or mother's occupation. That instinct changed my personality, from an outgoing to a quiet person who watched with whom I spoke. I was in that situation for four years, and it took me ten years more to come from the darkness to speak openly. But these refugees have endured ten years or more in the camps with their normal lives suspended.

Today we studied the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. My mind was drawn to my teacher in tenth grade. He knew so much about human rights. I remembered the last time I saw him, in a field in 1977, when our lives had deteriorated so much. He had come as part of a group of laborers to work the fields. He and I recognized each other right away, but we managed to stay quiet. I knew he was more frightened than me, because the Khmer Rouge had started to kill teachers. We sat under the shadow of a tree and talked. He told me of his concern because two of his fellow professors were taken by the Khmer Rouge (KR) for no reason. They simply asked, "Were you a professor?" and took them away. He told me, "If you look into the field, there are only two KR soldiers, and about three hundred of us whose rights are abused. Because we did not stand up together, they treat us like animals." A few weeks later, I met his wife in the field. She told me he had been taken away. Her eyes were red, but she did not dare cry. We were not supposed to cry when we lost a family member or when we were condemned as a traitor.

December 10: The next day the class was bigger: 15 women, 42 men, and one monk. I was so excited, and during the break I talked to every one of them, trying to get to know them more personally.

Today, we divided the class into two groups and practiced voting democratically. David Hawk told them a story, and asked them to vote on what they thought should be done about the human rights abuse in the story. After everyone decided what they believed, they took a final vote. They were so excited by the fact that they could actually vote to support an idea they liked. I explained to them that after an idea was voted on, no matter wrong or right, the majority would win. We would not consider the losers to have lost face. We discussed the democratic belief that most of the time the majority have the correct idea, and that is why people in each country should consider voting to be an important duty.

The students were very surprised to learn that all the human rights we described were also theirs. They asked so many questions. "Are these rights true? Are these rights also ours? Do they all apply to Cambodians?" The monk, Chao Sambo, asked: "Will the authorities allow us to practice our rights? Will they learn about these rights, too? How can a spiritual leader, a monk, help protect citizens' rights?"

It amazed me that most of these trainees already knew what they wanted to do with what they learned. They really wanted to reach out to more people or to talk to friends. Some asked for extra copies of the human rights documents because they wanted to send them out to friends and relatives inside Cambodia. I've never seen Cambodian people this eager to have learning materials. It's just something they were hoping to have, and they did not know that it already existed.

December 11: We ended up with 91 students: 68 men, 17 women. There are six monks in the class. They are a very good group, filled with questions: "Who will be responsible for our security if we exercise our rights?" asked an elderly man. "Why have we never been informed about these rights in the past?"

They asked more hard questions. "If the authorities do not give us these rights or if they abuse them, what will happen to them?" "Will the UN or the international community protect us?" "What will the UN do to the government or the authorities?" I told them that I hoped human rights organizations will be set up inside Cambodia to watch and monitor the abuses. These groups can interview witnesses so that the information can be forwarded to the UN or to international human rights monitors. I told them that the UN can pressure governments that abuse their citizens. It can embarrass them.

December 13: This is the last day of class. I teach them about speaking up— now it is their turn to be teachers. A third of the class handled it easily; the others find it difficult, and are very nervous, especially the women. I looked into these women's eyes and saw myself 10 years ago. I was the same way. I could almost read their minds. I told them they must not think they cannot speak out. I told them I had also been very scared, shy, reserved. We are so similar. But now I enjoyed my freedom of speech and my rights in America, and I tell them I have wished so long that the Cambodians back home could have the freedoms they deserve also.

I think that the majority of the refugees who are preparing to go back home want to take along with them something more than subsistence materials. They want to take along with them the knowledge that will help them to protect themselves. I could see in their eyes that they still had the Buddhist spirit. I told them to hold on tight to their thoughts, their hopes, their commitment, because we are all turning a new page of the history. We survivors have the responsibility to fulfill the wishes of millions of people who died in the horrible times. We cannot walk—we have to run together. The chance for a free election supervised by the UN is rare; we have to take advantage of it wisely.

Before I left for Bangkok, we went to a marketplace about a mile from the Cambodian border. When we arrived there the sun was almost down. It was not crowded any more. I saw the Cambodian flag flying above the trees.

I told my colleagues that I had no interest in shopping. I needed a quiet moment. While we were talking, a group of young children passed by holding ice cream and calling to each other in Khmer to rush back home before dark. We were stunned to hear the voices of Cambodian children outside of the camps in Thai territory. I stayed there to chat a little more with them. I asked, "Where do you live?" They pointed to where the flag was flying. I asked if they lived in Cambodia. "Yes," they told me. "We only come here every day to collect empty bottles so we can sell them inside Cambodia. We get about 150 riels [about a dime] each day." I asked them if they went to school. "There are no schools in our village," the oldest girl said. "If I want to go to school, I have to stay in the pagoda in a village far from here. I cannot do that because I have no father, and I have to help my mother earn a living."

I watched these children, no shoes, covered in dirt, their ice cream cones spotted with black dirt from their busy hands. I wanted to talk with them more, but one said, "We have to leave before dark so that we will not get lost in the forest." I watched them run towards the flag until they disappeared in the darkness that was then covering the country.

I imagined what they were traveling toward, and remembered my own journey across the fields with no shoes four years before I arrived in Khao I Dang. I looked again at the flag. I almost cried, but I kept it back as I pictured my father before his captivity. The night before he was taken away, Khmer Rouge soldiers came around to tell all high ranking military officers they recognized to present themselves to "Angka" immediately to avoid problems for their families. That night, around ten of my father's fellow officers gathered to talk to each other quietly. They discovered that all of them had received the same message.

My father assigned a family member to watch and make sure our last conversations were very private. We stayed over night to talk to him, but mostly we cried. My father did not cry. He said tomorrow was probably his last day with us for a long time, but that we should not assume that he had died. "I've been trapped by the enemy a couple of times, but I've never felt bad. One thing I would feel bad about is if tomorrow when I leave, my family cries. So, you all make sure you don't cry in public. In my absence you all will have a lot to endure, but you have to be very strong, we will get over it. We don't know how much time we need. If you don't cry tomorrow, you will not cry in the difficult time to come."

He was very concerned about me because I was weak and unhealthy. He repeated directly to me at least ten times, "Be strong, we will overcome it." We did not cry that morning. My dad smiled and left with his friends. I managed not to cry at all in the whole four years in the communist times. I wanted to show my father that because I had not cried during his captivity, nothing that happened later would merit my tears. When I saw this flag, all these images came back to me like it just happened yesterday. I remember every single word of his that night so clearly.

On Friday night we left for Bangkok. On the road, I was questioned very carefully at the checkpoint. First they asked me if I spoke Thai. I said no. And then I handed them my American passport. They carefully checked it for discrepancies in the picture. They came toward me, looking so closely at my face, even though the driver had turned on the lights. They probably thought I was a refugee.

March 12: Today, in Washington, I received a fax from Site 2. More than 1,500 refugees at Site 2 have taken the class that began with only 30 people. I am deeply pleased. Now is the time—while they are still in the camps, before they make the dangerous journey home—for my people to learn about their human rights. I feel that this knowledge will be the best way to ensure that the UN-monitored elections in Cambodia will be real—the votes of people who understand their rights and responsibilities, their ownership of their own land.

some against the Khmer Rouge and some against government corruption—have ended in bloodshed.

On the night of January 22, Tea Bun Long, a Cambodian official who had accused senior members of the Hun Sen government with corruption, was abducted by two men in a military jeep. He was later found shot to death. On January 28, a prominent dissident, Oung Phan, was wounded by unidentified gunmen.

Khmer Rouge attacks on several villages in Kompong Thom Province in early January left 13 civilians dead and 18 seriously wounded, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). About 10,000 people were internally displaced by the attacks, which ICRC called "the most serious cease-fire violation" so far.

At the end of 1991, about 180,000 people were displaced inside Cambodia, most of whom were uprooted by fighting in late 1989 and early 1990.

According to a needs assessment report written by the World Food Program (WFP) in March 1991, about half of those displaced were living in the westernmost provinces of Banteay Meanchey and Battambang. "Roughly 41 percent are living in distinct displaced persons sites," said the report, "and the remaining 59 percent are scattered in clusters within existing villages living among relatives and friends."

WFP has coordinated the relief effort for internally displaced persons since July 1990, working with the Cambodian Red Cross and a number of private and international organizations. As of March 1991, WFP estimated that $4 million in relief—principally emergency food aid—had been given the displaced persons.

The WFP report proposed a budget of $12 million for internally displaced persons in 1991–92, which included assistance with health and sanitation, food, shelter, water drilling, agriculture, and education. As of November 1991, about $2.5 million had been contributed.

China (Including Tibet)

About 280,000 Vietnamese refugees have been living in China since 1979, settled in five southern provinces. UNHCR spent about $3 million in 1991 to provide local integration assistance to roughly half this number, including water-system development, health services, crop production, forestry, and income-generating activities.

UNHCR allocated another $3 million to provide housing, jobs, and education to 600 Vietnamese refugees who had first settled in China, then fled to Japan in 1989, but were not permitted to stay. In December 1990, China and Japan agreed on a voluntary repatriation plan.

On April 10, 1991, the governments of China and Laos signed a bilateral agreement on the repatriation of Laotian refugees who have been living in southern China since the early 1980s. In July, UNHCR joined tripartite meetings in China and agreed to facilitate repatriation for any Laotians who wished to go home. About 2,000 out of an estimated 4,200 expressed a wish to return to Laos. By the end of 1991, 299 Laotians had gone home under UNHCR auspices.

Recent information from Asia Watch suggests that 10,000 Kachin refugees are living in China's Yunnan Province. The Kachin have fled the brutalities of a Burmese military campaign, including rampant destruction of crops and villages, forced porterage, torture, rapes, and executions.

Although Chinese authorities lifted martial law in Tibet in May 1990, political, ethnic, and religious repression continued in the Tibetan Autonomous Region. Thousands of political prisoners remained in detention, including Buddhist monks and nuns. More than 130,000 Tibetans have fled into neighboring Nepal and India since 1959, when Chinese troops violently suppressed a nationalist uprising in Tibet.

Hong Kong

While Vietnamese boat arrivals in 1991 dwindled to 1,600 people in all other asylum countries, Hong Kong experienced an influx of 20,200 for the year, including 5,100 in May alone. This new and unexpected surge was three times the number of arrivals in 1990 and prompted the Hong Kong and British governments, once again, to seek international consensus, and particularly the agreement of the United States and Vietnam, on the involuntary return of screened-out refugee applicants.

In June, Britain and Hong Kong proposed to engage in bilateral discussions with the Vietnamese government on the establishment of an "internationally managed center" for the screened-out inside Vietnam, possibly to be operated by UNHCR. What Britain and Hong Kong were seeking, in order to circumvent continued U.S. opposition to forced repatriation to Vietnam, amounted to the non-voluntary return of non-refugees to a non-Vietnam.

The United States indicated that it would not object to the bilateral talks, but insisted that this did not constitute any change in its policy of opposition to involuntary return to Vietnam.

Since June 1988, under the terms of the regional Comprehensive Plan of Action, all Vietnamese arriving in Hong Kong have been subjected to a screening process intended to separate refugees with a well-founded fear of persecution from other emigrants. Those who are granted refugee status are permitted to seek resettlement in another country, while the screened-out have been encouraged to return home voluntarily or face the prospect of long-term confinement and, possibly, involuntary return.

At the end of 1991, the Vietnamese detention camp population in Hong Kong stood at 60,000, of whom 34,800 were awaiting screening and 20,800 had been screened out. Another 4,400 Vietnamese had been granted refugee status and were living in open camps until they could be resettled.

Since 1988, more than 20,000 Vietnamese have resettled in third countries and nearly 14,000 more have volunteered to return to Vietnam.

Nothing ever came of the idea for the "internationally managed center," but following a round of talks in late September with Britain and Hong Kong, Vietnam announced that it was willing to take back any boat people who failed to qualify for refugee status under regional screening programs. Up until this time, Vietnam had joined with the United States in opposing forcible repatriation.

On October 22, the British government reached agreement with Vietnam on the return of 323 "double-backers," who previously had returned voluntarily to Vietnam only to leave again. Hong Kong contended that the "double-backers" had returned solely to avail themselves once again of UNHCR's $360 repatriation allowance. (As of September 23, UNHCR cut the amount to $50.)

On October 29, Britain and Vietnam announced that they had reached a much broader agreement on involuntary repatriation, one that encompassed not only "double-backers" but the entire population of screened-out in Hong Kong, present and future.

The U.S. response to the British-Vietnamese agreement was muted. The State Department reiterated its opposition to forcible repatriation of Vietnamese, but said it "would not expect force to be used."

Tension in the Hong Kong detention centers, meanwhile, began to build. Some camp leaders threatened violence and mass suicides if attempts were made to repatriate them.

In a statement issued at a November 5 hearing by the House Foreign Affairs Committee, USCR called for a suspension of involuntary repatriation, citing "widespread concerns about the reliability of the refugee screening process, the adequacy of international monitoring of returnees in Vietnam, and the volatility of the camps and detention centers in Hong Kong."

On November 9, Hong Kong forcibly repatriated a group of 59 Vietnamese, most of whom were "double-backers" who had returned once before to Vietnam only to leave again. A number of the returnees were dragged kicking and screaming to the airplane; two women reportedly were sedated.

On December 10, another group of 28 Vietnamese were returned involuntarily from Hong Kong, this time with less resistance.

The British have argued that more than 13,000 Vietnamese have returned from Hong Kong in the last three years without a single substantiated case of persecution, but human rights groups contested that claim. According to Asia Watch, returnees have been subjected to interrogations, surveillance, job discrimination, fines, and extortion by local Vietnamese officials.

(On February 3, 1992, 23 people, including 5 children, were killed in a nighttime riot in Shek Kong camp. Another 126 people were injured as rival gangs from northern and southern Vietnam battled each other with homemade weapons.)

Indonesia

At the beginning of 1991, Indonesia hosted a population of 20,500 refugees and asylum seekers, including 18,700 Vietnamese and 1,800 Cambodians. By year's end, the refugee population had declined slightly to 18,700, as new arrivals numbered only 1,200, the lowest annual total in the 15-year history of the Vietnamese exodus to Indonesia. More than 2,200 Vietnamese, meanwhile, resettled in third countries and another 1,200 voluntarily repatriated.

Within the framework of the Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) for Vietnamese refugees and asylum seekers, Indonesian immigration officials had interviewed 6,770 Vietnamese for refugee status at the end of 1991, of whom 2,220 had been screened in and were permitted to seek resettlement in another country. Another 4,190 had been screened out and 360 cases were awaiting a decision.

In March and April, 109 people fled by boat from the Aceh "special region" in northern Sumatra and sought asylum in Malaysia. By October, the Acehnese refugees totalled about 200. Amnesty International and Asia Watch have documented numerous instances of arbitrary arrest, torture, disappearances, and summary executions by Indonesian security forces in their efforts to suppress an Acehnese separatist movement, Aceh Merdeka.

On November 12, Indonesian troops opened fire on a crowd of demonstrators at Santa Cruz cemetery in East Timor, killing an estimated 100 people and injuring many more. Following the incident, about 30 people sought sanctuary with the delegation offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

In 1975, just after Portugal withdrew from its former colony and East Timor declared its independence, Indonesian forces invaded and annexed the territory. Since then, between 100,000 and 200,000 people have died, largely at the hands of the Indonesian army, as it has battled Fretilin, the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor. Thousands more have sought refuge in Portugal.

In 1984, approximately 11,000 refugees from the province of Irian Jaya fled across the border into Papua New Guinea, when heavy fighting broke out between the Indonesian military and guerrillas of the *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (OPM), or the Free Papua Movement. By 1991, about 3,000 Irian Jayans had returned to Indonesia, some unwillingly. In March 1991, an Indonesian court sentenced one suspected OPM leader, Melkianus Salosa, to life imprisonment. He had been deported from Papua New Guinea in July 1990 and immediately placed in military custody, where he reportedly was beaten.

Japan

Since 1979, Japan has offered permanent resettlement to more than 7,000 Indochinese refugees, primarily Vietnamese. At the end of 1991, another 900 Vietnamese asylum seekers were living in 12 government and UNHCR-funded facilities awaiting a durable solution.

Between May 1989 and March 1990, more than 2,800 boat people arrived in Japan seeking asylum, many of them claiming to be Vietnamese refugees. A few hundred of them actually were Vietnamese, but most proved to be Chinese nationals, farmers from the southern province of Fujian.

The influx prompted a swift review and revision of asylum agreements. Prior to October 1989, all Vietnamese boat people were given automatic right of temporary residence by the government. Some sought resettlement in other countries; others settled locally.

On October 6, 1989, Japan signed a memorandum of understanding with UNHCR to the effect that all Vietnamese boat people who arrived on or after September 13, 1989 would be screened in accordance with the terms of the international Comprehensive Plan of Action for Vietnamese asylum seekers.

Non-Vietnamese asylum seekers, however, were not covered in the understanding, and Japanese immigration officials determined most of the Chinese boat arrivals to be economic migrants and deported them back to China.

On April 28, Japan deported a political dissident, Zhang Zhenhai, who had hijacked a Chinese airplane to Japan, allegedly to seek political asylum. Asia Watch charged that the Japanese judicial system did not give him a fair or impartial hearing. The government has also obstructed the requests for asylum, refugee status, or visa extensions by Chinese students living in Japan, according to Asia Watch.

In December 1990, China and Japan agreed on a voluntary repatriation plan to return about 600 Vietnamese refugees who had first settled in China then fled to Japan in 1989 but were not permitted to stay.

Laos

On July 16, UNHCR announced a $3.4 million pilot program to encourage an estimated 59,000 Laotian refugees living in Thailand to return home. The new program grew out of a June meeting in Luang Prabang between the Thai government, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (LPDR) government, and UNHCR, which laid out a set of basic principles for repatriation.

Those principles, among other things, stipulated that "repatriation is to take

Vietnamese unaccompanied minors in Pulau Bidong camp in Malaysia. At its peak in June 1979, the camp held more than 43,000 Vietnamese refugees. Malaysia closed the camp in November 1991. UNHCR/P. Deloche

place under safe, humane, and UNHCR-monitored conditions" and that "those considered to be refugees and asylum seekers returning under the program will do so on a voluntary basis, whereas those rejected in the screening process will be returned without the use of force in safety and dignity."

Since repatriation programs were first established under UNHCR auspices in 1980, about 8,000 highland and lowland Lao have returned home voluntarily from Thailand. Until recently, the large majority had been lowland or ethnic Lao, with the highland groups—Hmong, Mien, Htin, and others—comprising about 25 percent of the total. In the last two years, however, highland Lao repatriations have outpaced the lowland Lao. In 1991, more than 800 highlanders returned to Laos, along with 600 lowlanders.

Most of the highlanders choosing to repatriate were Mien and Htin, who were not nearly as active as the Hmong in resisting the communist Pathet Lao both before and after 1975. Of the 3,000 highlanders who have returned to Laos in the last decade, only about 750 are Hmong; more than one third of the Hmong were returned involuntarily.

In late January 1991, Thai authorities removed 59 Hmong and other highland Lao from Chiang Kham camp and repatriated them to Laos. The returnees had been screened out as nonrefugees by Thai immigration officials on the border, but they had not been told of their status and were given only a few hours to prepare for their return. In the first nine months of 1991, Thailand involuntarily returned 598 screened-out Laotians, including 288 Hmong.

USCR visited Laos in November to assess the prospects for repatriation, both voluntary and involuntary. U.S. and UNHCR officials said that rumors of official harassment and persecution are followed up but, so far, none have been substantiated. The Lao government, however, would not permit USCR to interview a group of more than 100 screened-out Hmong who had recently returned from Thailand and were staying at a transit center in Vientiane.

In requesting $3.4 million for Lao repatriation and reintegration, UNHCR anticipated that 5,000 to 6,000 refugees would return between August 1991 and May 1992. At that point, UNHCR expected the repatriation program to have sufficient staff, funding, and facilities to process 5,000 to 6,000 returnees a month.

At the end of 1991, however, it seemed quite unlikely that repatriation would reach anywhere near that level in 1992. Continued resistance by Hmong insurgents had chilled interest in repatriation on both sides of the border, as did growing uncertainty about the future political and economic directions of the LPDR.

On April 10, 1991, the Chinese and Lao governments signed a bilateral agreement on the voluntary repatriation of Laotian refugees who have been living in southern China since the early 1980s. In July, UNHCR joined tripartite meetings in China and visited some of the Lao refugees in Yunnan Province. About 2,000 of the estimated 4,200 refugees expressed a wish to return to Laos; by the end of the year, 299 people had done so through UNHCR auspices. UNHCR also helped another 200 Laotians who had returned spontaneously in February to get back to their homes in southern Laos.

According to Amnesty International, Laos continued to detain without charge or trial 33 political prisoners at Sop Pan camp in Houa Phanh Province. They were originally sent there for "reeducation" more than 15 years ago.

Malaysia

On November 21, the last group of 52 Vietnamese left the island camp of Pulau Bidong bound for another refugee camp, Sungei Besi, on the Malaysian mainland. One week later, Pulau Bidong, once Malaysia's largest camp for Vietnamese boat people, was declared officially closed. At its peak in June 1979, Pulau Bidong held more than 43,000 Vietnamese refugees.

Between August 1978, when the camp was established, and the end of November 1991, more than 254,000 Vietnamese passed through Pulau Bidong on their way to resettlement in the West.

Pulau Bidong was closed, in part, because for all of 1991, not a single Vietnamese arrival was recorded in Malaysia and the Vietnamese population declined from 14,600 to 12,500 in that period. What those statistics don't record is how many Vietnamese sought to arrive in Malaysia only to be turned back to sea by coastal authorities. Western diplomats in Kuala Lumpur estimated that Malaysia has pushed back more than 12,000 Vietnamese asylum seekers since March 1989, most of whom have ended up in Indonesia.

Malaysian officials insisted, however, that the absence of Vietnamese boat arrivals is not a result of the pushbacks so much as it is due to the regional screening process, instituted as part of the Comprehensive Plan of Action in June 1989.

Of the 12,700 Vietnamese boat people in Malaysia as of October 1991, about 8,900 had been interviewed for refugee status. About 2,800 of those interviewed had been accepted as refugees and will be resettled in the United States, Australia, Canada, or another resettlement country. Another 2,400 have been screened out and face repatriation to Vietnam.

In 1991, a total of 1,744 Vietnamese were resettled in other countries, while 320 returned voluntarily to Vietnam.

Between March and October, an estimated 200 Acehnese fled to Malaysia from the Aceh region of neighboring Indonesia. According to Amnesty International, Indonesian armed forces may have killed more than 2,000 unarmed civilians since 1989 in suppressing a separatist insurrection in Aceh. Initially, Malaysia refused to allow UNHCR access to the asylum seekers and insisted that they would be repatriated.

On May 29, USCR wrote to the Malaysian government, urging that the Acehnese not be returned against their will and that they be given access to UNHCR.

On October 11, Malaysia and Indonesia announced they had reached an agreement not to forcibly repatriate any of the Acehnese. The Malaysian foreign minister said 60 Acehnese had agreed to return voluntarily, although UNHCR still had no access to the group.

Nepal

More than 10,000 ethnic Nepalese from Bhutan fled into Nepal in 1991. Ethnic Nepalese have been living in southern Bhutan for centuries but, since 1988, an aggressive "ethnic integration" program ordered by 35-year-old King Wangchuk, has alienated the Nepali-speaking Hindus.

The government has prohibited the teaching of Nepali in schools, permitting only Dzongkha, the official language of Bhutan. Traditional Bhutanese dress was to be worn by everyone. Strict enforcement of a discriminatory 1985 citizenship act left 30,000 ethnic Nepalese effectively stateless.

The government of Bhutan says the Nepalese comprise about 28 percent of the total population, but most sources say the figure is more like 45 to 50 percent.

In April 1990, Nepal's monarchy handed over power to a multiparty parliament and, just over one year later, popular elections were held for the first time in 32 years. In June 1990, a group of 60 political activists, predominantly ethnic Nepalese, formed the Bhutan People's Party (BPP), seeking multi-party democracy and an end to absolute monarchy in Bhutan. When the BPP organized demonstrations in September 1990, Bhutanese security forces opened fire on the nonviolent protesters. An estimated 400 people died and 1,000 more were injured.

In January 1991, King Wangchuk ordered the expulsion of all "non-nationals." By March, volunteer militias, armed and trained by the government, set upon ethnic Nepalese neighborhoods. Refugees crossing into India and Nepal spoke of beatings, rapes, torture, and imprisonment.

By March, the Bhutanese refugees numbered about 5,000. A report by a foreign journalist noted food shortages, malnutrition, and an absence of sanitation or medical assistance in the makeshift camps in the border region of Kakarvitta.

During the first few months of 1991, UNHCR sent three assessment missions to the border, but was prevented by the Nepal government from providing emergency aid until June.

(In February 1992, local Nepalese papers were reporting the arrival of up to 150 Bhutanese refugees per day, bringing the total to more than 14,500. In January alone, 100 refugees were reported to have died of hunger and disease.)

Most of the estimated 14,000 Tibetan refugees in Nepal fled their homeland in 1959, following Chinese suppression of a massive nationalist uprising, in which tens of thousands of Tibetans were killed. In 1990, more than 1,500 Tibetans arrived in Nepal, 167 of whom were forcibly repatriated by Nepalese border guards. In 1991, Nepal repatriated an estimated 30 Tibetans per month.

(On January 14, 1992, USCR wrote to the government of Nepal, expressing concern at reports that a Tibetan national had been killed on the border by Nepalese police.)

Papua New Guinea

At the beginning of 1991, about 7,100 refugees from Irian Jaya remained in Papua New Guinea (PNG). The refugees, who are ethnic Melanesians, numbered more than 11,000 in 1984 when they fled their homeland after heavy fighting broke out between the Indonesian army and guerrillas of the separatist Free Papua Movement (OPM). From 1984 to the end of 1990, about 3,000 people returned voluntarily to Indonesia.

In June, PNG authorities closed all of the camps in West Sepik Province and gave the residents a choice of moving to a settlement site in East Awin or returning voluntarily to Indonesia. A total of 362 Irian Jayans opted to go home under UNHCR auspices. The returnees were met in Jayapura by an ICRC delegate who took responsibility for monitoring their situation. Another 122 people relocated to the East Awin site from the West Sepik camps in June.

Of the remaining Irian Jayan refugees in Papua New Guinea, nearly 4,000 were receiving UNHCR assistance, while 3,100 lived in five "closed border camps" in

UNHCR/ R. Burrows

Ten-Year Anti-Piracy Program Closes on a Strong Note

Court Robinson

All refugee sagas should end so well. With no reported pirate attacks on Vietnamese boat people since July 1990, a decade-old anti-piracy program run by the Thai government and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) closed out on a strong note on December 31. "The war on the pirates is not over," said a final report by a UNHCR assessment team, "but it has reached the stage where it can be effectively managed" by Thai agencies alone.

In 1981, UNHCR reported a total of 1,444 pirate attacks on Vietnamese boat people in the South China Sea: 961 people were listed as dead or missing and 857 women had been raped. Typically, pirates were professional fishermen from southern Thailand who turned renegade when given the occasion, sometimes committing simple robbery, sometimes much worse.

Responding to international outrage and a demand for action, the Thai government and UNHCR joined forces, and on June 3, 1982, the Anti-Piracy Arrangement (APA) was born. Since then, thirteen countries have contributed more than $25 million to the effort, including $10 million from the United States.

An initial emphasis on air and sea patrols proved to be misplaced—over the years, only two suspects were caught in the act—and the focus was shifted to the coastal communities. "Even though crimes were committed at sea," noted the assessment team's report, eventually "the perpetrators had to return to land." When they did, they found Thai police units and harbor officials registering fishing boats, photographing crews, and conducting aggressive public awareness campaigns on the penalties for piracy.

The UNHCR role was to link piracy victims with police and, ultimately, prosecutors. UNHCR officials developed standard forms for reporting attacks regionwide, monitored court trials, arranged witness transfers from abroad, and provided interpretation services through the course of investigation, arrest, and trial.

From 1984 to the end of 1991, Thai officials arrested and charged 161 suspects for piracy offenses. A total of 106 defendents were found guilty of one or more charges and given sentences ranging from probation to life imprisonment.

As an added deterrent measure, the Thai navy and marine police targeted sea and air patrols in areas of frequent attacks in the southern Gulf of Thailand and maintained an observation post at Kra Island, a once notorious pirate lair.

The number of attacks decreased steadily through the decade: from 534 in 1982, 162 in 1987, to 37 in 1990. But in 1988, even as the numbers continued to fall, the level of violence of the attacks began to rise alarmingly, with more than 500 people reported dead or missing, compared to 95 the previous year. In 1989, the number of dead or missing climbed above 750. Rapes and abductions spiralled upward as well.

In August 1989, Vietnamese survivors of one attack told how Thai pirates had seized and plundered their boat. According to a UNHCR official who debriefed the survivors, the pirates "brought up men singly from the hold, clubbed them, and then killed them with axes. . . . Ramming, sinking and killing of Vietnamese in the water followed." In all, 71 people perished, including 15 women and 11 children.

Why the sudden rise in violence? In part, it seemed that the very success of the anti-piracy effort had driven off the occasional opportunists but left behind a nucleus of professional criminals, who took pains to leave no witnesses. But it was also true that with a new upsurge in Vietnamese boat arrivals—45,000 regionwide in 1988 and 70,000 in 1989 when they had averaged only 25,000 for the previous five years—the patience of some asylum countries simply wore out.

In the first half of 1988, the Thai navy and marine police intercepted several thousand Vietnamese boat people and pushed them back out to sea, resulting in at least 120 deaths. One marine police the Western Province and did not receive UNHCR aid.

(In late January 1992, anywhere from 300 to 1,500 Irian Jayan refugees crossed the 500-mile border into Papua New Guinea as fighting flared again between the OPM and the Indonesian military.)

Philippines

A little more than 200 Vietnamese asylum seekers arrived in the Philippines in all of 1991, the lowest annual total since the boat exodus began in 1975. The population in Palawan, a first asylum camp, was 7,100 at the end of 1991. Another 10,900 were in the Refugee Processing Cent (RPC) in Bataan awaiting resettlement. The RPC has become almost exclusively Amerasians and their relatives in transit from Vietnam and bound for the United States.

Almost all of the inhabitants of Palawan arrived after the June 1989 cut-off date established by the regional Comprehensive Plan of Action and were thus subject to screening. Although some U.S. refugee program officials cited problems of equity, speed, and bureaucracy in the Philippines screening program, the approval rate was 43 percent, the highest of any country in the region.

As of December 1991, Philippine authorities had interviewed 7,600 Vietnamese for refugee status. They approved 1,780 and rejected 2,700; the remainder had either initial decisions or appeals pending.

Fighting between the Philippine armed forces and the insurgent New Peoples Army continued to create internally displaced persons. In February, up to 35,000 people were displaced by military combing operations against communist rebels in the Baguio region. Armed conflict in Mindanao displaced an estimated 5,700 families from January to May. The total number of internally displaced persons in the Philippines is generally estimated at one million.

Thailand

By some calculations, Thailand's refugee population in 1991 dropped to its lowest levels since the Indochinese exodus first began 16 years ago. By other calculations, that was the problem.

UNHCR figures showed only 68,000 Indochinese refugees in Thai camps at the end of the year. This included 53,000 Laotians, 15,000 Cambodians, and 400 Vietnamese. The last time Indochinese refugee numbers had been below 70,000 in Thailand was in 1975. (Ironically, the numbers then were almost identical: 53,000 Laotians, 10,000 Cambodians, and 500 Vietnamese.)

But in 1975, these numbers encompassed a full picture. In 1991, they told only a small part of the story. A complete tally of refugees, displaced persons, and asylum seekers in Thailand ran to more than 500,000 people.

The 15,000 Cambodians designated as refugees were all living in Khao I Dang, which was, until November, the only Khmer camp in Thailand administered by UNHCR. But more than 350,000 other Cambodians were in other border camps administered by the UN Border Relief Operation (UNBRO), which had no explicit protection mandate and accorded the residents no status save that of "displaced persons."

As of November 1, 1991, UNHCR took over responsibility for all the Cambodian camps in Thailand, to oversee a massive voluntary repatriation effort scheduled to start in April 1992. It appeared that the refugee status that had eluded most border Cambodians for so many years was theirs to claim only upon leaving Thailand.

Since 1989 for the Vietnamese and 1985 for Laotians, new arrivals in Thailand have been classified as asylum seekers, pending an interview with a local immigration official. Those who are screened-in are given refugee status and permitted to seek resettlement in a third country. The screened-out continue to be called asylum seekers by UNHCR and are counted, and often housed, separately from the refugee populations.

At the end of 1991, in addition to the 53,400 Laotian refugees in Thailand, there were 5,400 Laotian asylum seekers, whose cases were pending or who already were screened out. Vietnamese refugees numbered only 440, while Vietnamese asylum seekers totalled 13,300 in Thailand.

Of all the uprooted populations seeking safety in Thailand, refugee status has been most elusive for the most vulnerable: the Burmese. Most of the 70,000 Burmese asylum seekers in Thailand belong to ethnic minority groups—Karen, Mon, Karenni, and others—living along the Thai-Burmese border. The single largest group were the Karen, who numbered 47,000, following an influx of 8,200 more refugees in January 1992. There were also 12,000 Mon refugees and 3,500 Karenni.

Relief workers and refugees along the border uniformly described the situation as exceedingly desperate at year's end. Tens of thousands were displaced as the Burmese army systematically leveled small villages in both Karen and Mon areas. Thousands of ethnic men and women were forced into porterage, and the children were forcibly conscripted into the Burmese army. Meanwhile, the Thai government proceeded with plans to deport vulnerable minority populations back to Burma.

In late May 1991, Thai authorities announced that all Burmese "illegal immigrants" in Tak Province would have to leave the country by the end of the month or face deportation. Approximately 200 Burmese "illegal workers" were handed over to Burmese authorities in Myawaddy in early June. It is not

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official, whose salary at the time was covered by the APA, admitted that he had assisted in several pushbacks while out on patrol. In mid-1989, Malaysia picked up where Thailand had left off and began pushing Vietnamese boats toward Indonesia. In such a climate of official intolerance it is not surprising that criminal violence would flourish anew.

But now, since a robbery-at-sea in July 1990, no pirate attacks on boat people have been reported, suggesting that the risks are too high, or the yields too small, to bother any longer with the Vietnamese. It is also true that the number of boat people arriving in Thailand and Malaysia has dropped considerably; only 162 reached those two countries in all of 1991. The donor community is right to close out the anti-piracy arrangement. Despite the tragic aberration of 1988, Thailand has shown both the will and the means to fight piracy on its own, and UNHCR needs the dollars far more urgently elsewhere.

Although Malaysian pushbacks have not ended, the waters of Southeast Asia are safer than they have ever been for the boat people. The tragedy is that, after 16 years, Vietnamese asylum seekers continue to put out to sea. Now, it is after they reach shore that the real problems arise: prolonged detention, restrictive screening procedures, and growing reliance on involuntary repatriation. In seeking a humane end to this story, the international community and the asylum countries could take a lesson from the anti-piracy program: tackle the problem at its source, keep the peace, honor commitments, and don't punish the victims.

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known how many ethnic minorities might have been included in this group.

In August, local officials in Sangklaburi district ordered all Burmese ethnic minorities in the area—including an estimated 15,000 Mon and Karen living in refugee camps—to demonstrate legal residence or face deportation to Burma.

There were also about 3,000 Burmese students in Thailand, half of whom were living along the border, and half were in Bangkok.

At the end of 1991, UNHCR had recognized 1,864 Burmese asylum seekers in Bangkok as "persons of concern," the majority of whom were students. Another 1,232 had been rejected and 535 had applications pending. Although the designation has been vital in terms of obtaining food and shelter—those deemed to be of concern are provided with 2,500 Baht per month, or roughly $100, by UNHCR—and occasionally third-country resettlement, it has been nearly useless as a form of local protection.

Burmese students and other "persons of concern" to UNHCR have been routinely arrested by Thai police and held in the Suan Phlu Immigration Detention Center. Since 1989, students and others "of concern" have been frequent victims of forced repatriations from Ranong, Mae Sot, and several other points along the border.

Thailand remained intent on establishing a "safe area" for an estimated 1,500 Burmese students at a former border police training school in the Pak Thor district of Ratchburi Province. The area that Thai authorities have also referred to as a "holding center" could be opened by May 1992, funded and administered initially by the Interior Ministry. The prospects for international involvement, whether programmatic or financial, appeared uncertain.

The "safe area" proposal has generated substantial controversy and confusion since it was first broached in mid-1990. The students in Bangkok generally have opposed to the idea, offering three common fears about moving to a "safe area": the site would become a staging ground for mass repatriation, their names would be given over to the Burmese embassy, and they would lose the freedom to carry on political work in Bangkok.

UNHCR, on the other hand, has supported the "safe area" idea, saying it offers at least a small number of Burmese protected status and could become the first, officially recognized "open camp" for refugees anywhere in Thailand.

On November 5, USCR wrote to Thai Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun that "if Thailand chooses to proceed with the implementation of the 'safe area' policy, we urge the government, at minimum, to ensure that the area is a safe distance from the border, that explicit assurances of nondeportation are given, that entry into and exit from the 'safe area' are voluntary, that identification of those in the 'safe area' is not shared with Burmese authorities, and that access is available to UNHCR and other designated humanitarian organizations to provide adequate monitoring and assistance, including educational services."

In addition to the ethnic minority groups and student activists, an estimated 160,000 other Burmese are living in Thailand without documentation. Many are engaged in cross-border trade or have crossed into Thailand seeking temporary employment, but some have fled the risk of forced conscription, porterage, or other abuse at the hands of the Burmese authorities.

Since 1988, Thai authorities have repatriated thousands of Burmese "illegal immigrants," who face, at minimum, stiff fines under Burma's Immigration and Manpower Act and six-month prison terms if they cannot pay. Ethnic minorities (including Arakanese and other so-called "Indian" Burmese who are numerous in Thailand) and suspected political activists face great risk of interrogation, detention, torture, and ill-treatment in Burma.

Vietnam

Although Vietnamese boat flows have confounded trend-spotters for nearly 17 years, some observers noted that, in 1991, the exodus was no longer a regional phenomenon; its impact had become increasingly local. More than 22,000 Vietnamese boat people sought asylum in Southeast Asia in 1991, the smallest annual total since 1986. Of these, all but about 1,600 went to Hong Kong.

In the course of the year, nearly as many Vietnamese returned home voluntarily (10,200) as were resettled in other countries (12,200). But not all the Vietnamese who went home did so willingly. On October 29, the British and Vietnamese governments announced that they had reached a broad agreement on the involuntary return of screened-out cases in Hong Kong. Up until this time, Vietnam had joined with the United States in opposing forced return of the screened-out.

On November 9, Hong Kong forcibly repatriated a group of 59 Vietnamese, most of whom were "double-backers" who had returned once before to Vietnam only to leave again. A number of the returnees were dragged kicking and screaming to the airplane; two women reportedly were sedated.

On December 10, another group of 28 Vietnamese were returned involuntarily from Hong Kong, this time with less resistance.

The British have argued that more than 13,000 Vietnamese have returned from Hong Kong in the last three years without a single substantiated case of persecution, but human rights groups contested that claim. According to Asia Watch, returnees have been subjected to interrogations, surveillance, job discrimination, fines, and extortion by local Vietnamese officials.

The Orderly Departure Program (ODP), which was first established in June 1979 under the aegis of UNHCR, continued to expand. In 1989, a total of 43,200 Vietnamese nationals left their country safely and legally via ODP. In 1990, the number increased to 70,400. By 1991, nearly 9,000 people each month were departing Vietnam as refugees and immigrants. The United States alone took about 70,000 Vietnamese in 1991, including former reeducation camp prisoners, special Amerasian immigrants, and family reunification cases.

At the beginning of 1991, UNHCR handed over financial responsibility for ODP in Vietnam to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The number of Cambodian refugees in Vietnam totalled 21,000 at the beginning of 1991, of whom 13,850 were living in four rural settlements assisted by UNHCR. Half of the caseload are women and 21 percent are children under 15 years old. UNHCR assistance to the rural settlements is expected to phase out by the end of 1992.

Since 1980, UNHCR has assisted more than 13,000 Cambodian refugees in Vietnam to resettle in other countries. The population has shown little to no interest in voluntary repatriation.

In mid-November, the Vietnamese government began to release the last group of about 100 political prisoners still held in "reeducation" camps since 1975. This amnesty, however, did not extend to those who had been imprisoned for political crimes committed after 1975.

EUROPE

Croatian women flee their homes in Novska following fighting in October 1991. More than a half million persons were displaced by the fighting. Reuters

Austria

In the span of a few years, Austria has moved from being one of Europe's most open and receptive countries for refugees and asylum seekers to being among the least.

It is estimated that two million refugees have entered Austria since the end of World War II. Except for about 613,000 who remained—about half of whom were ethnic Germans—the majority looked upon Austria as a stopping point en route to the West. More than 350,000 Soviets, mostly Jews, bound for the United States and Israel, have transited the country since 1958. But Austria is no longer a country of transit, and has realized that persons it recognizes as refugees will have to be integrated within Austria itself.

Decisions about imposing visas, returning asylum seekers to third countries, or stationing soldiers on the eastern border to stop the entry of undocumented asylum seekers are being made at a time when public attitudes towards refugees and asylum seekers appear to be negative, as indicated by dramatic gains in several provincial elections in the fall by the Freedom Party on an anti-immigrant plank.

As early as 1988, summary asylum procedures were introduced for certain nationalities, accelerating the process for asylum seekers from Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia. But the more restricted access to the asylum procedure dates from the asylum law of April 1990, under which foreigners were precluded from applying for asylum at the border and passengers were prevented from disembarking from stopover flights transiting through Austria. The law made it easier for border guards to make on-the-spot decisions about turning away undocumented asylum claimants. If asylum seekers came from third countries where they were not persecuted, they could be considered as being protected there.

Prior to deportation to a third country, assurances were not required that asylum seekers would be given full access to refugee determination procedures before being returned to their home countries. In a March incident publicized by Amnesty International, 17 Tamil asylum seekers from Sri Lanka were held in the transit lounge of the Schwechat airport in Vienna and denied access to a UNHCR representative. They were returned to Italy, where their plane had first landed. A UNHCR official said that at least some of the Tamils had presented "clear grounds for asylum" before being deported to Italy. The Italian authorities deported them directly to Sri Lanka, refusing to hear their asylum claims because they had been returned by Austria as "deportees in transit."

Overland arrivals encountered comparable difficulties. The U.S. State Department's annual human rights report stated that more than 100,000 persons were prevented from entering Austria during 1991 or were forced to leave the country at the point of entry. A substantial number of these, said the report, "may have qualified for refugee status."

The Austrian authorities have imposed visa requirements on certain nationalities that produce large numbers of asylum seekers. In 1990, visa requirements were introduced for nationals of Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Poland. The number of asylum requests from some of these countries dropped accordingly. For example, Romania, the source of the largest number of asylum seekers in 1990 (12,199), produced 5,417 claims in the first eight months of 1991, in contrast to the 9,783 claims registered for the same time period in 1990, a decrease of 45 percent. These decreases were offset by dramatic increases for claims by nationals of Yugoslavia, which rose from 768 in all of 1990 to 2,810 through September 19, 1991.

Further steps were taken through government regulations issued in November 1990 and April 1991 to limit government assistance to several categories of asylum seekers, including Romanians, Bulgarians, and most other East European nationalities, those without proper travel documents, and nationals of Turkey, except for Kurds from certain regions. Through August 31, 5,707 had been affected by this policy.

A total of 27,306 asylum applications were filed in 1991, an increase over the 22,789 asylum claims filed in 1990, and 21,882 in 1989.

During the first eight months of 1991, 12,922 asylum cases were decided. Of that number, 14 percent were approved. This nearly doubles the approval rate of 6.9 percent for 1990. During the last half of the year, Austria was greatly concerned about developments in Yugoslavia. After neighboring Slovenia declared its independence from Yugoslavia in June and a brief shooting war broke out, the Austrian army was placed on alert at the border. Austrian authorities insist that their presence was solely to prevent the conflict from spreading across the border and vehemently denied allegations that persons crossing from Yugoslavia were being required to show that they had money to support themselves.

Visas have not been required for citizens of Yugoslavia, but sources in Austria confirm that the law does require "tourists" to have a certain amount of money. However, when USCR raised this question with Austrian humanitarian officials working closely with the government, they said that the soldiers were instructed only to prevent persons carrying weapons from entering but otherwise to facilitate the entry of persons fleeing the conflict. The Austrian Minister of Interior said that most of the displaced persons from the conflict in Yugoslavia who had crossed into Austria had not, in fact, applied for asylum or assistance. Private agencies noted that many of an estimated 320,000 legally resident "guestworkers" were now supporting their families and friends from conflict areas of Yugoslavia in severely overcrowded apartments, mostly in Vienna.

By December, the Red Cross was estimating the presence of about 8,000 persons from Yugoslavia displaced into Austria as a result of the war.

Belgium

Belgium has seen a steady increase in the number of persons seeking asylum during the past decade. From 3,057 applications filed in 1982, the number rose to 7,644 by 1986, and to 12,964 in 1990. In 1991, the total reached 15,220.

On October 1, a new, stricter asylum law went into effect. Under the new law—dubbed by some the "2 × 5% rule"—an applicant from a country from which at least five percent of the asylum applicants originated in the previous year, but of whom less than five percent were granted refugee status, will either be denied entry to Belgium or denied his or her extension of stay in Belgium unless the applicant can establish that a serious risk to his life or liberty exists if returned. Stricter provisions also regulate asylum applicants' residence requirements and appeals of negative decisions. In particular, appeals no longer automatically suspend deportation.

On October 28, USCR wrote to the Belgian authorities raising concerns about the new law. "Such a system fails to account for political changes in a country of origin, nor to offer adequate protection for what could be the five percent of claims that have a credible basis," said USCR. "For example, in countries such as Yugoslavia, Kuwait, and Haiti, the number of bona fide refugee claims in 1990 might have been relatively small. Yet the political situation in each country changed dramatically in 1991. Why should the claims of asylum seekers be prejudged based on obsolescent circumstances?"

The Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CGRA) replied, saying that the officers of his agency "are not kept uninformed of political changes taking place in countries of origin and that they take those into account when examining urgent requests for reexamination of inadmissibility decisions taken by the Ministry of Justice."

Since the CGRA came into being on January 1, 1988, the asylum approval rate through June 30, 1991 stood at 34 percent. In that time, 4,731 decisions were rendered. As of June 30, 1991, 16,390 cases were pending a decision. Of these, 7,190 were before the CGRA, 8,422 were with the Alien's Office to determine eligibility to request asylum, and 778 were appeals of negative decisions. Nationality groups falling within the "2 × 5% rule" in 1990 who were deemed inadmissible in 1991 and subjected to an expedited procedure were Pakistanis, Indians, Ghanaians, and Poles.

In the first 11 months of 1991, the CGRA made 1,161 decisions on the merits, of whom 518, or 44.6 percent, were granted asylum. However, another 887 cases were denied on technical grounds, most often due to the inability to contact the asylum seeker, which would reduce the overall approval rate to 25.3 percent. In the first 11 months of the year, the largest nationality groups applying for asylum in Belgium were from Romania (2,270), Zaire (1,774), Ghana (1,375), India (1,243), Yugoslavia (1,053), Turkey (994), Pakistan (881), and Nigeria (692). Nationality groups falling within the "2 × 5% rule" in the first ten months of 1991 included Zaireans, Ghanaians, Indians, and Pakistanis. Although Nigerians had a zero percent approval rate, they represented less than five percent of the total applicants. Romanians with a five percent approval rate and Yugoslavs with a six percent approval rate managed to stay above the five percent threshold for inadmissibility. It should be noted, however, that these approval rates by nationality were for the first 11 months of 1991 only; borderline nationalities, such as Romanians and Nigerians, could well have fallen within the "2 × 5% rule" by year's end. On the other hand, although denied asylum at a high rate, Yugoslavs and Zaireans—two of the fastest growing nationality groups in 1991— were not being deported due to the unsettled conditions in both countries.

Only 3 percent of the asylum applicants arrived directly at the National Airport in Brussels; the rest traveled via

France, Germany, or the Netherlands. This continued a downward trend in direct arrivals during the past several years: 6 percent arrived by air in 1990, 13 percent in 1989. The drop was attributed, in part, to the law on carrier liability, which levied sanctions on airlines carrying undocumented passengers to Belgium. On November 6, the Council of Ministers approved the construction of a detention facility on the airport grounds to hold asylum seekers deemed inadmissible according to the "2 × 5% rule" pending their expulsion or reexamination of their claims.

Criticism was leveled during the year at overcrowding in Le Petit-Château transit center, where homeless asylum seekers are housed. The problem stemmed, in part, from the failure to find other places to accommodate asylum seekers in local communities. Le Petit-Château has a capacity for only 550, not nearly enough to meet the need.

As in some of its neighboring countries, there appeared to be a rise in anti-foreign sentiment in Belgium during the year. In May, four nights of rioting broke out in immigrant neighborhoods of Brussels primarily involving youths from Morocco. In November, an anti-immigrant party campaigning on the slogan "Our People First" boosted its representation in the parliament from 2 to 12 seats.

In February 1990, the Belgian government established a refugee resettlement quota of 100. Criteria for determining eligibility for admission as a refugee under the quota included showing links to Belgium and being financially secure.

Cyprus

The outlook for the 203,000 Greek Cypriots and 65,000 Turkish Cypriots displaced in 1974 appeared somewhat brighter in 1991. Although no concrete progress was made, resolution of the situation in Cyprus reemerged high on both the U.S. and UN agendas.

U.S. President George Bush visited Turkey and Greece in July, hoping to narrow political differences so that September talks could be scheduled in Washington. Officially, the Bush administration claimed to have no plan for a Cyprus solution, but the United States was said to be pressing Turkey to reduce the Turkish-held part of Cyprus from 38 to 25 percent and to accept the return of a certain number of Greek Cypriot refugees who fled to southern Cyprus after the 1974 Turkish invasion. Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal said he was prepared to make concessions. But by August, the Ozal administration was preoccupied by an election campaign that brought a new government to power, led by Suleyman Demirel. Progress was further slowed when UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar's term expired at the end of December. Not wanting to prejudge the situation for his successor, de Cuellar opted not to start negotiations.

(Negotiation preparations got under way January 3, 1992, just two days after the new UN Secretary General, Boutros-Ghali was installed; negotiations are scheduled for mid-year.)

Czech and Slovak Federal Republic

On January 1, 1991, a new "Law on Refugees" went into effect in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (CSFR), which establishes an asylum procedure for recognizing both Convention refugees as well as humanitarian refugees. At the beginning of the year, 2,213 cases were pending. During 1991, 2,836 additional cases were registered. A total of 2,996 cases had been processed by year's end, of whom 799 were granted refugee status. Adjusting for cases that were closed before a final decision was reached, the approval rate among cases decided was 37.6 percent.

Most of the asylum seekers came from other former members of the Soviet bloc. The largest group originated in Romania, mostly members of the Romany "gypsy" minority. Bulgarians and Soviets also registered in significant numbers. Fearing a still greater influx from this region, the CSFR began imposing border controls on visitors from both Romania and the Soviet Union. Outside Europe, Angolans were the largest nationality group seeking asylum in the CSFR.

On July 10, the CSFR ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol. The government has created a federal Commissioner for Refugees, as well as commissioners in both the Czech and Slovak republics.

At year's end, 786 refugees and asylum seekers were housed in former Soviet army barracks that have been transformed into refugee reception centers. Basic nutritional and medical needs are met in the centers. Except for optional Czech language courses, refugees are left to educate their own children according to their nationality group. Persons from 29 different countries are housed in the camps, though nearly three quarters came from three countries, Romania, the former Soviet Union, and Bulgaria.

There were 29,733 foreign workers in the CSFR at year's end, most of whom were Vietnamese. The Vietnamese, as well as Romanies, were the target of racist attacks by right-wing "skinhead" gangs during the year. In September, Czechoslovakia and Vietnam entered into an agreement for the repatriation of about 17,000 Vietnamese migrant workers. In 1990, USCR had called upon President Vaclav Havel to make the option of applying for asylum open to Vietnamese who may have had reasons to fear return.

Denmark

In 1991, about 4,600 asylum applicants had arrived in Denmark compared to a total of 5,292 in 1990. As of August, stateless Palestinians (418) represented the largest group. In 1990, Denmark's Refugee Appeals Board deemed Lebanon a safe country to which stateless Palestinians could be returned. Deportations began in early 1991. To avoid return, seventy stateless Palestinians took sanctuary in a Copenhagen church on September 1, 1991. *(In early 1992, a bill was under discussion to enable them, and the rest of the 200 Palestinians presently in Denmark who have been recognized as refugees but not granted asylum, to obtain renewable residence permits instead.)*

On June 13, 1991, a year later than the other eleven EC countries, Denmark signed the Intergovernmental Convention on Asylum, known as the Dublin Convention. Prior to signing, Denmark had to amend its Aliens Act to align it with the Convention. Danish law previously did not allow for an asylum request filed in Denmark to be transferred to and assumed by another state. By contrast, the Dublin Convention allows an asylum application to be transferred to any of the EC states regardless of where it was filed, based on such factors as family relationships. Secondly, Denmark preferred that asylum seekers await determination of their claims from outside the country, whereas the Convention obliges countries to keep asylum seekers within their borders pending status determinations. In this connection, during the first eight months of 1991, 582 asylum seekers were either rejected at the border or within three months of arrival. These people were returned to the countries from which they had come after Danish authorities deemed the countries safe and maintained that the 582 involved could file asylum applications there. Although Denmark was the last to sign the Convention, it ratified the document simultaneously, making Denmark the first and, as of February 1992, only country to ratify the Convention.

In another domestic development, the Ministry of Justice was implicated in the mishandling of Tamil refugee family reunification applications. Tamil reunification requests allegedly were placed routinely "at the bottom of the pile." The controversy resulted in the resignation of a department head at the Ministry of Justice and the chairperson of the Parliamentary Legal Rights Committee.

Following stateless Palestinians, the next largest groups to apply for asylum in the first eight months of the year were Iraqis (392), Iranians (300), and Sri Lankans (171). Eastern European applications remained low. The Danish Refugee Appeals Board suspended consideration of Romanian cases from February until August 1991. It suspended consideration of Yugoslav cases pending the stabilization of the situation in Yugoslavia.

Federal Republic of Germany

A new Alien Law came into effect on January 1, 1991, superceding many state laws in favor of a federal statute for Germany as a whole. Many responsibilities, including determination of refugee status and removal of denied asylum seekers, were shifted from state to federal authorities. Among other provisions, the new law abolished appeals for "manifestly unfounded" asylum applications and eased restrictions on employment for asylum seekers. Previously, asylum seekers with cases pending had been barred from working for five years; under the terms of the new law, they still had to wait a year before working, and employment was still only authorized for certain professions and according to the needs of the labor market. However, on July 1, the one-year delay was lifted. While the new law was more restrictive than some of the states on issues such as the deportation of rejected asylum seekers, it also introduced legal status for the spouses and dependent children of persons granted asylum.

Some refugee advocates criticized the failure of the Aliens Law to provide a legal framework for humanitarian—de facto—refugees. The ad hoc practice of granting six-month "tolerations" (Duldungen) remained in effect. Starting in July, "tolerations" had to be approved by the federal Interior Ministry, not simply the state Interior Ministry, as before. However, if the federal Interior Ministry decides not to renew a "toleration," the states are obligated under the new law to deport the alien. The federal Minister of Interior indicated that the "tolerations" for about 300,000 rejected asylum applicants would not be automatic, and initially set cut-offs based on date of arrival for Iranians, Lebanese (and Palestinians from Lebanon), Ethiopians, Afghans, Chinese, Tamils from Sri Lanka, and Christians and Yezides from Turkey.

A total of 256,112 asylum applications were filed in 1991. Yugoslavs applied in the largest numbers, some 74,854, three times more than in 1990. They overtook Romanians as the source of the largest number of applicants. Romanians still filed 40,504 asylum claims. Applicants from Turkey represented the third largest group, with 23,877 applicants. More than 5,000 persons applied from Bulgaria, Iran, Vietnam, Afghanistan, the former Soviet Union, and Sri Lanka, as well.

From 57,379 asylum applications filed in 1987, the number has steadily grown to 103,076 in 1988, 121,318 in 1989, and 193,063 in 1990. The 256,112 applications filed in 1991 continues this trend with a 32.7 percent increase over the number applying in 1990. Reversing another trend, however, an asylum approval rate of 6.9 percent in 1991 represented a rise after a steady six-year decline from 29.2 percent in 1985 to 15.9 percent in 1986, 9.4 percent in 1987, 8.6 percent in 1988, 5.0 percent in 1989, and 4.4 percent in 1990. Although about 168,000 cases were processed during 1991, the backlog of cases pending increased by 100,000 over the previous year.

Ethnic Germans Underlying German attitudes towards asylum seekers is the presence of hundreds of thousands of recent ethnic Germans who have arrived from the east. These are divided into two categories: *Übersiedler*, who crossed from what had been East Germany into West Germany, and *Aussiedler*, who arrived from other Eastern European countries or the Soviet Union. In 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell, 344,000 East Germans fled to West Germany. In the first half of 1990, prior to reunification of the Germanies, 238,000 *Übersiedler* crossed over. During 1989 and 1990, some 774,000 *Aussiedler* crossed into West Germany as well. Although they were no longer officially counted—or called "*Übersiedler*"—after reunification, an estimated 10,000 Germans per month continued to migrate from former East Germany to the western part of the country during 1991.

Aussiedler, too, continued to arrive after the fall of communism in the eastern bloc. Although Germany has a policy of no immigration, Article 116, paragraph 1, of its constitution guarantees citizenship to *Aussiedler*, effectively making them an exception to the rule. Regardless of their reasons for leaving, ethnic Germans have never been regarded as "refugees" by the Federal Republic of Germany. Under the terms of Article 116, they have been regarded as immigrants and given automatic citizenship.

About half as many *Aussiedler* arrived in Germany in 1991 as had in 1990. Some 221,995 arrived in 1991, in contrast to about 397,000 the previous year. Two-thirds of the *Aussiedler* came from the Soviet Union, the remainder from Poland and Romania.

Soviet Jews The arrival of about 4,000 Soviet Jews in the first ten months of 1990 touched off a sensitive debate about the setting of a quota for this group's entry, given the history of Germany's treatment of the Jews. In December 1990, the interior ministers of the German states met and agreed in principle on setting a quota, but couldn't agree on a number. The federal government had suggested an annual quota of 1,000 per year. In January, the prime ministers of the German states dropped the idea of a quota for Soviet Jews, and said they would be admitted on humanitarian grounds without undergoing the asylum procedure. They would, nevertheless, be required to apply for entry visas at German diplomatic posts in the USSR. The state prime ministers estimated that Germany had a capacity to absorb as many as 10,000 Soviet Jews per year, and said that the policy would be reviewed should the number of arrivals exceed that number.

Asylum Seekers A rash of attacks against asylum seekers and other foreigners made many feel as threatened in Germany as they had in their countries of origin. Germany's Federal Crime Office reported more than 300 crimes against foreigners in the first seven months of 1991. That figure shot up to 1,000 by mid-October. On Unity Day, the first anniversary of German reunification, two Lebanese children were seriously burned by a gasoline bomb thrown into their hostel. Other incidents included a gang of youths throwing a Mozambican from a train on Easter Sunday in Dresden and killing him; a May 3 pogrom on an apartment housing African workers in Wittenberg, in which two Namibians were injured after being forced to jump from a fourth floor balcony; and the burning to death of a Ghanaian on September 19 in Saarlouis, a town on Germany's western frontier. From September 17–22, in Hoyerswerda, Saxony, neo-Nazis threw molotov cocktails and rocks at residences for asylum seekers and foreign workers to the cheers of onlookers. The authorities handed the mob a victory by evacuating the foreigners, mostly African and Vietnamese, from the town. Although Germany's ceremonial president Richard von Weizsäcker clearly condemned the attacks, made a point of visiting centers for asylum seekers, and reaffirmed Germany's commitment to Article 16 of the constitution on the right to asylum from persecution, Chancellor Helmut Kohl was slow to condemn the attacks. He spoke in terms of amending the asylum clause in the constitution and speeding up asylum procedures and deportations of rejected cases.

In October, USCR wrote to Chancellor Kohl calling upon him to condemn unequivocally the attacks on refugee centers. USCR said that the announcement that Germany would begin restricting asylum seekers to large, isolated camps and the proposal of the Interior Ministry to increase deterrent measures at the borders appeared to shift the blame to them and to suggest that the grievances of the neo-Nazis who attacked them were legitimate. "In an atmosphere of intense xenophobia and fear," said USCR's letter, "these measures, as well as your own public statement, 'We must not stand by and watch the asylum law being abused,' do not reflect a government acting responsibly to protect people claiming persecution and seeking your protection."

In addition to calling on Chancellor Kohl to prosecute those who attack asylum seekers, USCR also urged him to reaffirm his government's commitment to Article 16 of the constitution, which guarantees the right to asylum.

A detailed response from the Chancellor's office said that Kohl had "recently again emphasized that we owe respect and tolerance to the aliens who live among us," and that the federal government had "expressly condemned aggressive acts against aliens as attacks on our constitution."

However, the letter went on to describe the restrictive set of agreements that the leaders of four major political parties entered into with the Chancellor in October that, in part, prompted the USCR letter. These agreements included completing manifestly unfounded cases within a six-week period. This process will include an initial decision, where possible, within two weeks before a beefed up Federal Office for Refugees; reduction to one week of the period within which to lodge an appeal of that decision; conclusion within two weeks of accelerated court procedures before a single judge, with no further appeal and no consideration of late applications or of other complaints not directly bearing on the right to stay; and, finally, the execution of deportation orders by states within one week.

Related to these measures to accelerate the asylum procedure, the agreement also called for accommodation of asylum seekers in central community camps; regulations to increase penalties considerably against persons bringing in undocumented aliens; increased use of "in kind" rather than cash payments for asylum seekers needing assistance; more restrictive practices for processing visas; and reinforced control of borders with non-EC countries. The letter from the Chancellor's office said that the ministers and senators for the German states had agreed on October 17 to enact these regulations, and that the Ministry of Interior was drafting supporting bills for the *Bundestag*, the German federal parliament, to consider.

The letter also said that based on a conversation of October 10 with the opposition Socialist Party of Germany (SPD), the federal Minister of the Interior was proposing a supplementary bill that would narrow the interpretation of Article 16 of the constitution and thereby "unburden our procedures for granting asylum" by excluding from the asylum procedure persons who "according to general convention stem from countries free from persecution or who travel through safe third countries."

Although many of the attacks on foreigners actually occurred in what had been West Germany, asylum seekers expressed greatest fear about the violence in the former East Germany. East Germany, indeed, had no experience with asylum seekers and, since reunification, was ill equipped to accommodate them, given its own economic troubles. Under the terms of the reunification treaty, it was agreed that the five states comprising the former East Germany would accommodate 20 percent of all asylum seekers. Asylum seekers refusing to reside in the five eastern German states to which they were assigned were denied government benefits and had their passports confiscated. Many went underground, abandoning their claims, rather than move to the eastern states.

It was not at all clear that public attitudes against refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants were as negative as the violence would suggest. Opinion polls in October showed that 87.5 percent of the German public thought that people who were persecuted for political reasons should be granted political asylum. Demonstrations were held in a number of cities to show solidarity with asylum seekers and other foreigners on German soil. However, right-wing, anti-immigrant parties showed dramatic gains in the polls in local elections in Bremen and Lower Saxony, although their strength was still in single digits. And other polls suggested an undercurrent of anti-foreign sentiment. A nationwide poll in October found 86 percent of the German population to think foreigners were a "big problem" for Germany, and revealed that slightly more than half in the west and slightly less than half in the east supported confining asylum seekers in camps.

The government's decision to place asylum seekers in large camps was controversial and sensitive given Germany's history of forcing minorities into concentration camps where millions met their deaths during the Holocaust. This time around, the government dropped the term "concentration camp" in favor of the term "collective quarters." Although the decision was criticized in some quarters, the opposition SPD supported the move, in part, as an alternative to an amendment of Article 16 of the constitution on the right to asylum, an option favored by the governing Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

Germany has resettled 35,300 refugees from overseas on a "quota" basis. The overwhelming majority, 33,680, have been from Southeast Asia. Admission of quota refugees is based on a narrow set of criteria including: if admission to Germany is the "only means" to preserve the aliens' life and health; if admission is part of any international action in which Germany is obliged to participate for political and moral reasons; and if admission is endorsed by all the German states in advance and without any reservations.

In September 1990, the German federal government adopted what it called a "Refugee Concept," purporting to be a comprehensive policy both for handling the asylum issue on German soil, as well as promoting solutions to the root causes of refugee flight. Among other points, the Refugee Concept calls for counteracting migratory pressures in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe through support for social and economic reforms, and to support development aid in the Third World with the same aim in mind. The policy promotes the "regionalization" of refugee admissions, keeping refugees in the same region as their country of origin. In the European context, it strongly supports harmonizing European asylum policy in the EC states within the framework of completing a European Single Market.

Finland

The number of asylum seekers in 1991, 2,137, represented a decrease from the 2,743 who entered in 1990. However, the number of asylum seekers had risen dramatically in 1990 from the 174 who applied for asylum in Finland in 1989. The largest groups of asylum seekers in the first eight months of 1991 originated in the USSR (336), Somalia (330), Turkey (140), and Yugoslavia (116). Finland also has an annual quota of 500 refugees referred by the UNHCR or selected by Finnish delegations or consular officials through visits to refugee camps. Among the quota refugees, the predominant nationality groups remained Iranians, Kurds from Iraq and Iran, and Vietnamese.

In 1991, asylum seekers waited as long as one year for first hearing decisions by the Ministry of Interior. Of the 882 asylum cases processed by the end of August 1991, only 16 were granted asylum but an additional 703 were granted residence permits on humanitarian grounds.

A new Aliens Act entered into force in March 1991, which authorizes local police to grant residence permits. Permit seekers have no right to appeal police rejection of their temporary residence permit applications. Negative decisions on permanent residence can be appealed.

In late 1991, the Parliamentary Ombudsman was considering a complaint objecting to the Council of State's decision, to consider the Soviet Union as a safe country of first asylum. The complaint arose in connection with the arrival of 160 Somalis from Tallinn in the USSR. The Ministry of Justice was also working to extend free legal aid to asylum seekers.

France

In recent years, anti-foreigner sentiment generally has affected the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers in France. Spurred on by the anti-immigrant National Front, and its leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, mainstream political figures have joined in the xenophobic chorus. In July, Prime Minister Edith Cresson proposed using special planes for mass expulsions of foreigners. In a speech in June, the mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac, said that "the odor and noise" of foreign neighbors makes the "French worker, on the landing, become crazy." He added, "It is not being racist to say this." Earlier, Chirac had declared that "immigration must be totally stopped." Former President Valery Giscard d'Estaing agreed, proposing "a zero quota for immigration." In September, Giscard d'Estaing wrote an article for *Figaro* magazine warning of an "invasion" of foreigners and calling for a referendum to restrict French citizenship to "blood" relationships, children born of French parents, a key tenet of the National Front. In November, a public opinion poll showed that 38 percent of the French public agreed with the National Front's anti-immigration stance. The NF platform includes cutting off immigrants from social benefits, banning construction of mosques, imposing quotas on foreigners in public schools, and swift deportation of undocumented and unemployed aliens.

In June, France became the first country to ratify the Schengen Supplementary Agreement. The Schengen Agreement, initially agreed upon in 1985 by France, Germany, and the Benelux countries, and signed by the five in June 1990, standardizes visa requirements and entry criteria in order to lift border controls among the signatories. Since then, Italy, Spain, and Portugal have also signed. The Schengen Agreement includes specific provisions relating to asylum seekers, most importantly, setting forth criteria to determine which country is responsible for adjudicating asylum claims, as well as exchanges of information on asylum seekers. Schengen also includes a provision levying sanctions on carriers transporting undocumented aliens, as well as provisions on security and law enforcement matters. It is similar to the Intergovernmental Convention on Asylum (the Dublin Convention) and the draft Convention on the crossing of external borders.

A total of 46,784 persons applied for asylum in France in 1991, in contrast to 56,053 applicants in 1990. This represents a continuing decline since 61,422 persons applied for asylum in 1989, which represented the highest point in the number of applicants, a 79 percent increase over the 34,352 applicants in 1988. Of about 85,000 asylum cases decided during 1990, about 13,000 were granted asylum, an approval rate of about 15 percent. Since 1980, France has granted asylum to 154,587 persons. In 1991, 15,984 cases were granted asylum.

In 1990, the government took several steps to speed up the asylum adjudication process. First, the budget of the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Exiles (OFPRA) was tripled, allowing it to computerize its system and to hire more adjudicators. While the time to process a case in the mid-80s could take several years, the new procedures allowed the authorities to make final determinations within several months. Other steps have been taken to keep the process moving swiftly. On December 20, 1990, OFPRA announced that France would no longer accept asylum applications from nationals of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary due to changed political circumstances in those countries. It announced that, as of January 8, 1991, residents of these three countries would no longer have their refugee status automatically renewed.

On July 10, Prime Minister Cresson said that the immigration law would be enforced "with firmness." She indicated that border controls would be toughened, including the imposition of transit visas rather than tourist visas for certain countries and the removal of rejected asylum seekers. On July 23, the government announced a program to resolve one way or the other the status of an estimated 100,000 rejected asylum seekers still residing in France. Rejected asylum seekers who met certain conditions—including having entered France before 1989 and having no criminal record and a job—would be able to regularize their status. Some 50,000 applied for consideration. On December 29, the government said that of 20,500 cases adjudicated, 7,000 had been granted the right to stay and 13,500 denied. The latter group was given a month to leave voluntarily, at which point they would be issued expulsion orders. Hunger strikes by rejected asylum seekers and their French supporters to protest what they saw as the rigid interpretation of the criteria for regularizing status took place in several locations in France.

In November, the cabinet adopted a draft law fining carriers who bring undocumented aliens to France. Allowance was made, however, in cases where the alien was found to have a credible asylum claim or if the carrier acted in good faith.

One of France's most prominent refugees, Shahpour Bakhtiar, the former prime minister of Iran, was assassinated in August. France sought the extradition of an Iranian diplomat who fled the country on suspicion of involvement in the murder.

Another prominent refugee, Abdelmouen Diouri, a well-known critic of the Moroccan government, was arrested in his home in Paris on June 20 and immediately deported to Gabon without being given an opportunity to contact his lawyer. France had recognized Diouri as a Convention refugee since 1974, but expelled him according to a procedure of "absolute urgency." USCR wrote to the French government in June and July to protest the action and to call for a review of the deportation order. On July 9, the administrative court of Paris suspended the expulsion order and authorized his return to France. The government announced on July 11 that they would appeal to the State Council, the highest judicial body in France. Anti-foreign sentiment seemed to be directed against Muslims from former French colonies in North Africa and the Middle East. Between 4 and 5 million Muslim immigrants live in France. A government survey in June found that 71 percent of the public believes that France has too many "Arab" residents.

Due in part to its historical, colonial involvement in Southeast Asia, France has resettled the largest number of Southeast Asian refugees of any European state, 107,219, from 1975 through 1990. Most have been granted citizenship and are fully integrated into French society.

Greece

Albanians poured into Greece in 1991 continuing the mass outflow that began in December 1990. In the first nine months of 1991, 23,742 Albanians entered Greece according to government statistics. At least the same number are estimated to have entered undetected. In January, 90 percent of those entering Greece were among Albania's sizeable ethnic Greek minority. Later in the year, this proportion fell to 50 percent, with the number of Muslim and Roman Catholic Albanians increasing.

Also in January, Greece sent back thousands of Albanian asylum seekers. Estimates varied from 1,500 (according to the Greek government) to 5,200 (according to the Albanians). The UNHCR objected to the Greek government's return of 4,300 persons without consultation.

In response to concerns voiced by USCR, the Greek Ambassador to the United States reiterated the Greek Prime Minister's statement made on a January 13 visit to Albania that "the Greek-Albanian border will remain open for those wishing to move between the two countries." As arrivals increased, however, dissenters, police, and military personnel were identified and separated from the others. Although estimates of the number of Albanians living in Greece vary widely (the government told USCR that some 150,000, documented and undocumented, were living in Greece at year's end), it appeared that Albanians have not been permitted to enter the asylum procedure. Although some 9,837 were granted temporary asylum, tens of thousands appear to have been deported to Albania, particularly those who arrived after the amnesty law was passed in Albania.

At least 825 Iraqi Kurds fled Turkey into Greece in early 1991. The asylum seekers, who reported mistreatment at the Diyarbakir refugee camp in Turkey, bribed their way out of the camp, and were smuggled into Greece.

A 1991 amendment to the penal code allowed deportation of aliens within a very short period after arrival. The amendment compelled individuals to make asylum claims immediately upon entry or in court proceedings shortly thereafter. Otherwise the aliens could be subject to imprisonment as illegal entrants or immediately deported. The government's position toughened still further on December 21, when the Ministers of Public Order and Defense introduced measures to halt unauthorized Albanian entry. Frontier military patrols were beefed up and special police units ordered to arrest and immediately expel persons entering without authorization.

Apart from Albanians, 2,672 persons applied for asylum in 1991. The government granted refugee status to 123 during the year. The four largest groups were Iraqis, Iranians, Sri Lankans, and Ethiopians, based on the first half of the year.

Hungary

Since signing the 1951 Refugee Convention in March 1989, Hungary has faced influxes of refugees with differing ethnic and political backgrounds, as well as differing reasons for entering Hungary. With respect to European refugees and asylum seekers, Hungary has acquitted itself well since signing the Convention. However, it recognizes only Europeans as refugees, which has resulted in disparate treatment for non-European asylum seekers.

Ethnic Hungarians receive the warmest reception. One-third of all ethnic Hungarians—about 5 million persons—are estimated to live outside Hungary. Of them, about 3.5 million live in neighboring countries. From 1988 through August 1991, 71,800 persons applied for asylum in Hungary, of whom 51,100, or 71.2 percent were from Romania. Of the Romanians, 83 percent were of Hungarian ethnic origin. About 6,000 of the Romanians have moved on to other countries. Another 2,000 have voluntarily repatriated.

In 1991, 5,192 asylum seekers were entered into the refugee determination procedure out of a total of 75,000 seeking some form of refuge. Of the official asylum applicants, 72 percent were Romanian, 14 percent Soviet and 9 percent Yugoslav. Most other nationalities tend to consider Hungary a country of transit rather than of permanent asylum. Asylum seekers in transit tend not to register with Hungarian authorities upon entering the country in an attempt to pass undetected into Western Europe. Through the first nine months of 1991, some 13,000 undocumented non-Europeans were apprehended and deported to Romania. Austrian authorities also apprehended large numbers at border crossings with Hungary and pushed them back into Hungary. From there, they were generally bused to the Romanian border.

Unless asylum seekers—even Europeans—submit their requests within the first 72 hours of arriving in Austria, authorities do not take their claims seriously.

Although the government allowed only about 10 percent of the estimated 2,500 Romanians who applied for asylum in the first half of 1991 into the refugee determination procedure, it has generally allowed Romanians to stay in Hungary with or without a formal refugee status determination.

Non-Europeans who claim to be refugees are generally sent to the Kerenestarcsa center north of Budapest, where UNHCR personnel can interview them. If UNHCR recognizes them as refugees, they are allowed to stay temporarily pending a resettlement offer from a third country. In practice, however, Hungarian authorities refer only a few to UNHCR. Since UNHCR established an office in November 1989, it has only recognized 41 non-Europeans as refugees, and most of those simply showed up at the UNHCR office in Budapest. Only one person has been formally resettled in a third country. Others have left on their own.

Of far more concern to the Hungarian authorities in 1991 was the influx of as many as 48,000 persons fleeing the civil war in Yugoslavia. About 67 percent of this number were Croatian; 26 percent, ethnic Hungarian; 7 percent, other. The first significant movement of refugees fleeing the war occurred after August 18, when the Baranja triangle region—created by the Drava and Danube rivers and the Hungarian border—became a battleground between Serbs and Croats. However, about a quarter of the population of this region in Croatia were ethnic Hungarians, roughly equal to their proportion of the refugee population. Women represented 43, men 24, and children 32 percent of the total. In the early stages of the fighting, displaced persons tended to stay briefly in Hungary, but to cross back to their homes if the security situation allowed it.

Although there is no clear category in Hungarian law for war refugees—Hungary has signed the 1951 Refugee Convention, which defines refugees on the basis of a well-founded fear of persecution—Hungary has not required refugees from Yugoslavia to demonstrate their claim to refugee status before assisting them.

In October, an official from the government's refugee department told USCR that only 140 persons from Yugoslavia had actually applied for political asylum under the terms of the 1951 Refugee Convention since July. "The others didn't apply because they see their situation as temporary. The police give them a temporary residence permit to legalize their stay." However, from interviews conducted in October by USCR with displaced persons in Hungary, it appeared that the authorities rather than the refugees themselves made a blanket decision not to use the asylum system or to make refugee-status determinations. None of the refugees interviewed by USCR seemed to be aware of the possibility of applying for asylum individually, what that would entail, and what rights might result from a positive determination of refugee status.

Citizens of Yugoslavia have not needed visas to travel to Hungary, and that policy remained in effect even under the strain of civil war, so that as "tourists", Yugoslav citizens could remain for 30-day renewable periods if they had no need for assistance as refugees. An official in the government's refugee office informed USCR in October that his office was negotiating with the police to extend the residence permits for Yugoslavs from one to three months. He said that this registration procedure is the basis for assigning food and health assistance.

The overwhelming majority of the displaced persons had "tourist" status, and about 35,000 were managing to stay with private families. The Red Cross and church groups were supplying host families with food and hygiene packets to encourage their hospitality, but voluntary officials readily admitted that their assistance was not sufficient to cover the costs to members of local communities who had opened their doors to the refugees. As the war dragged on, increasing numbers were running out of resources and were beginning to appear at the seven camps established for them along Hungary's southern border. By year's end, some 12,200 were living in public shelters.

Most of the six camp facilities that USCR visited were either nominally guarded by a single gatekeeper, with free passage in and out, or not guarded at all. The exception to this open approach was the Nagytad camp, the largest facility, which held 1,300 at the time of the USCR visit. Citing worries about the effect on the local townspeople, the camp administrator stated that refugees were not permitted to leave the camp. He said categorically that the refugees would not be permitted to work.

However, in Nagytad, as in the other Hungarian facilities, the attitudes of the camp administrators seemed genuinely humanitarian. They also operated in a well-organized, professional manner. Conditions in the camps were good. All facilities were well maintained and clean with adequate recreational space. The buildings—no tents—were in good repair. Local schools were being utilized for school-age children. Hungarian doctors and nurses made regular visits. Hot meals were served.

Among refugees' interviewed, there were few complaints, and those were minor. Nearly everyone expressed gratitude to the Hungarian government and people. Camp administrators generally commented on the high number of elderly and infants, both of whom demand extra care. Providing education for school-age children also created strains on budgets. Although newcomers have generally arrived in decent health, the camp director at Mohacs said that he could tell which of the new arrivals had been living in cellars, because "their clothing and hair are full of lice."

In August, for the second time in 1991, an influx of
without giving them an opportunity to apply for asylum.

Many of the new arrivals came with little more than the clothing on their backs. A Red Cross worker observed, "They come running; they come with nothing. It is tragic to meet such people. Some arrive in a work suit, some were just feeding the animals and had to run, some in their pajamas, jumping out of bed. Most arrive like that."

Camp administrators most frequently cited needs for baby goods, diapers, baby food. All were looking ahead to the winter months as well and the anticipated needs for warm clothing.

Although interviews with refugees in Hungary confirmed that most indeed expressed an interest in returning home, even among this group, a significant number doubted that they would be able to return anytime soon. Others clearly were seeking alternatives to repatriation. The refugees' interest in repatriation was qualified—political and security conditions had to be met before they would consider returning. Many expressed pessimism about how long it would take to meet these conditions.

Albanian refugees arrived by boat in Italy. This time, Italy summarily returned about 17,000 persons
AP

Italy

The Italian government embarked on a highly restrictive asylum policy in 1991 in order to bring its refugee and asylum policy into conformity with other members of the European Community and to respond to pressure created by several large influxes of Albanian asylum seekers.

The changes began in 1990 when Italy signed the Dublin Convention and the Schengen Supplementary Agreement, agreements among West European states to harmonize asylum practices. Italy attempted to clear the decks for a new approach to asylum adjudication by instituting an amnesty under which 220,240 aliens regularized their status. The government then established a new legal framework for dealing with asylum seekers. While incorporating the Convention definition of "refugee" into domestic law as well as a *nonrefoulement* provision, the new legislation also included legal authority to reject asylum seekers at the border if they arrive via third countries that have signed the Refugee Convention. Within the first four months of 1991, Italian officials turned away about 30,000 foreigners at the border under provisions of the new law. Italy also refused to allow asylum seekers who had valid visas for third countries to enter at airports. Somalis with valid visas to East European countries were affected the most directly, and officials reportedly returned some to Somalia apparently without hearing their asylum claims.

In part as a result of restrictive measures at ports of entry, only 3,376 asylum requests were filed in 1990. Of the 1,386 cases decided, 562 were granted, a 59 percent approval rate. Although Albanians represented nearly 40 percent of all claimants in 1990, their numbers remained manageable until March of 1991, with the sudden influx of 28,000 at the Brindisi harbor. Statistics as of July 31, 1991, which included about 20,000 Albanian claimants from the March influx, but not the next major influx in August, showed the dramatic shift both in total numbers and approval rates. A total of 25,354 claims were presented—including 20,897 Albanians—in the first six months of 1991. Of the cases decided at that point, about 5.5 percent were approved. For all of 1991, 31,373 asylum claims were registered, of whom 22,835 were Albanian. Some 1,698 cases were declared admissible, 4,533 were rejected, and 24,820 undecided at year's end.

The arrival of large ships jammed with Albanian asylum seekers in a five day period, March 2–7, caught the Italian authorities off guard. For several days, the thousands of asylum seekers remained stranded on the docks with no shelter from the sun and elements, inadequate food and water, and a lack of sanitary facilities. About 3,000 opted for immediate repatriation. Another 2,000 returned to Albania within weeks of arriving, and by the end of July another 1,000 of the March cohort had agreed to return voluntarily. To relieve the strain on the Brindisi area, the authorities dispersed the remaining Albanians to temporary receiving centers in Sicily and elsewhere in the country. They gave the Albanians until July 15 (later extended to the end of July) to find jobs. Those who failed to do so or to establish a refugee claim, were told they would be deported.

On several occasions, USCR questioned the authorities on the treatment of the Albanians who arrived in March. On March 11, USCR wrote to the authorities and issued a press release calling the situation on the Brindisi docks "intolerable." USCR cited the lack of basic food, sanitation, and shelter and charged that these conditions "have essentially coerced [the Albanians] into returning to the dangers from which they fled." USCR also protested Italy's imposition of a naval brigade to interdict Albanians on the high seas and return them without examining their potential refugee status.

In response, on May 14, Italy's Ambassador to the United States wrote to USCR, calling the events in March "a veritable 'invasion' of our coastline" and said that the difficulties in managing the situation "were attributable to the great numbers arriving in Brindisi within the space of a few hours in and around March 5." Throughout the year, and despite mounting criticism from USCR, the Italian authorities remained open and responsive to USCR inquiries and concerns.

On July 23, as the job deadline for the Albanians neared, USCR asked the Italian authorities whether denied applicants would be able to appeal negative decisions, whether deportation could be withheld on humanitarian grounds, and if the interdiction policy was to be reconsidered.

In a letter dated August 1, the Italian embassy outlined its current policy with respect to asylum seekers from Albania. It said that the government's Central Commission for Authorization of Refugee Status considers the claims, that negative decisions could be appealed to the regional administrative court, and that execution of the negative decision would be suspended for the duration of the appeal.

The letter said that some 2,000 Albanians were in professional job training programs. Under the new immigration law of 1990 (known as the Martelli Law), the following categories are permitted to remain in Italy: those who have been granted political refugee status; those who have found regular employment; those registered for and attending special professional training courses; and those under 18 years of age who have been authorized by the Minors Court to attend Italian schools (there were 2,200 children among the Albanian arrivals). In a statement that would prove not to be prescient, the letter noted that "it appears that the arrival of Albanians via the seaboard has ended, and thus the question of sending them back is irrelevant." The official said that "a month or so ago the last ones who attempted to reach Italy in this manner were intercepted at sea and accompanied back to Albania. From that moment the phenomenon has stopped."

The authorities were in fact busy during the spring and summer, working to prevent a recurrence of the events of March. High level officials traveled to Albania and secured that government's agreement to work to stem unauthorized boat departures and to facilitate the return of deportees. In return, Italy pledged 60 billion lira (about $44 million) in aid. After completing the agreement, Italy's Immigration Minister announced, "Albanian citizens who now try to arrive along our coast will henceforth be considered as illegals, clandestine persons, and will, as a result, be denied entry."

On June 15, Italy escorted six boats back into international waters after refusing their estimated 800 passengers permission to disembark. In all, about 2,000 Albanians in rafts and other small craft were returned in June.

On August 8, an old freighter, the *Vlora*, arrived at the Bari harbor crammed with about 14,000 persons. The dismal welcome on the Brindisi pier looked good by comparison with the reception of the August arrivals at Bari. In Bari, in the August heat, no toilets were provided for the 17,000 waiting on the pier, and the stench of excrement hung over them. As the situation deteriorated, several clashes broke out between the Albanians and the Italian police.

This time Italy denied the Albanian asylum seekers any opportunity to present asylum claims. Thousands were herded into planes to take them back to Albania. About 2,000 who initially had been part of a group held at a soccer stadium refused to leave. They relented after being promised that their asylum claims would be considered. However, after leaving the stadium and being dispersed to various other sites, these people were rounded up in the pre-dawn hours of August 18 and summarily deported.

USCR protested in a letter on August 21, saying that the authorities had ignored their own asylum determination procedures outlined in previous correspondence, in addition to maltreating and deceiving the asylum seekers in Bari. "This appears not only to be an egregious violation of the due process right of these asylum seekers to have a fair determination of their claims to refugee status," said the letter, "but ultimately a violation of Article 33 of the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees, which prohibits the forced return of refugees to places where their lives or freedom would be threatened. In the absence of a fair determination of refugee status, no assumptions are justified about the potential for harm that these deportees might face upon return."

In response, the embassy noted recent reforms in Albania moving away from communism. "Based on this evolution," said the August 30 letter, "and considering the new guarantees for respect of human rights provided by the Tirana government, the displaced Albanians who arrived in Italy to escape the serious economic crisis their country is suffering could not be considered political refugees."

The letter said that the repatriation began only after the Albanian government had given full guarantees that no sanctions would be levelled against the repatriates, whether civilian or military.

On October 21, USCR met in Rome with government officials and discussed the treatment of Albanians, the proposed plans for dealing with refugees from the civil war in Yugoslavia, and Italian refugee and asylum policies in general.

On the Albanian situation, government officials said that the treatment of the last 2,000 was due to a miscommunication between police and other government branches. "At the end," said one official, "it solved the situation. No one was killed."

The officials in Rome stressed the importance of actions being taken bilaterally with Albania to address the root causes of flight. Italian aid to Albania at that point had been boosted to about $200 million. The aid package included sending 700 unarmed Italian soldiers to operate a comprehensive 3-month aid program. In addition to distributing food aid, the military presence apparently also involves cooperation with Albanian maritime authorities to prevent unauthorized boat departures and monitoring of Albanian harbors by Italian military personnel.

With the confusion created by the fresh influx in August, Italy postponed plans to deport jobless Albanians who arrived in March. Officials indicated that they would seek to deport any who remain jobless in March 1992.

At that time, there still were no significant numbers seeking assistance from Yugoslavia. Most who had arrived had come as tourists with proper documents and were given temporary, renewable residence permits. At the same time, old barracks in Trieste were being readied in the event of a mass influx of refugees from Yugoslavia. Although the treatment of persons displaced by the fighting in Yugoslavia was still a hypothetical one at the time of the USCR visit, it appeared that the attitudes of the Italian officials were more receptive toward asylum seekers from Yugoslavia than from Albania. In particular, arrivals from Yugoslavia of Italian origin would likely receive permanent resident status.

USCR was informed of a recent change in immigration policy. In 1990, after the amnesty declaration, Italy had embarked on a no immigration policy, with exception only for asylum seekers with valid refugee claims and certain family reunification cases. Under the new system, which only began functioning in March, asylum seekers are provided assistance for 45 days, but are not permitted to work and must find their own place to stay. However, determinations are taking almost a year to decide, on average, according to the officials in Rome. This policy was being reconsidered in October 1991, such that certain job categories, as well as some temporary workers, would be accepted, in addition to asylum and family unification cases, but no numbers would be attached to these categories.

Netherlands

According to the Dutch asylum procedure, based on the Aliens Act of 1965, every request to be admitted as a refugee or to be granted a residence permit on humanitarian grounds must be dealt with. This has created a fundamental problem for the Netherlands as it contemplates harmonizing its asylum procedures with the rest of Europe. In 1990, the Dutch Supreme Court held that the Netherlands was, indeed, obligated to examine all asylum requests, even if another country had previously determined the asylum applicant's case. This ruling contradicts the main thrust of the Dublin Convention, which is to require that asylum applications are filed and decided in only one member state.

In April 1991, the Dutch Council of State, the country's highest administrative court, recommended that the Netherlands not ratify the Schengen Agreement, which standardizes visa requirements and entry criteria for France, Germany, the Benelux countries, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. The Schengen Agreement, like the Dublin Convention, includes specific provisions relating to asylum seekers, most importantly, setting forth criteria to determine which country is responsible for adjudicating asylum claims. The Council of State said that the Netherlands would not be able to transfer responsibility for examining an asylum request to another state without a prior agreement on the procedures and criteria for adjudicating the claim in that country.

In 1991, about 21,615 asylum applications were filed. This put the Netherlands at about the same pace as the previous year when 21,208 cases were filed; in 1989, 13,898 asylum applications were received. In 1990, the Netherlands granted Convention refugee status to 6.6 percent of the claimants and refused 85 percent. It accorded de facto status to 8.3 percent of claimants in 1990, meaning that they were not recognized as refugees according to the Convention, but were nevertheless protected from deportation. In fact, during the year a new status was proposed—"conditional permit to stay"—that would protect aliens from deportation for three years due to conditions in the country of origin. The status had not been enacted by year's end.

The largest number of asylum seekers in the first nine months of the year came from Sri Lanka. Iran, Romania, and Somalia represented the next largest groups. Towards the end of 1991, the number of asylum seekers from Yugoslavia dramatically increased. A drop in applicants from Africa occurred, as well.

Changes in the Netherlands' asylum law were debated in the Dutch parliament during the year. The government proposed detaining asylum seekers entering by air or sea, or for cases receiving a negative decision within the first month of arrival. A majority of the Second Chamber opposed the detention of rejected asylum seekers in closed camps pending expulsion or the outcome of their appeals. A compromise was reached, however, that initially would place new applicants in one of four reception centers. The decision about future accommodations would depend on the outcome of their claims. Manifestly unfounded claimants would remain in the centers, whereas those admitted to the asylum procedure would be moved to one of 18 other reception centers used as a transition to conventional housing. Those admitted to the asylum procedure would be offered language courses in the first year until their cases were decided. If granted asylum, they would receive job training in the second year, and be integrated into the job market in the third year.

To make room available in the reception centers, a government commission proposed that the estimated 7,100 "tolerated" cases (asylum seekers who were turned down, but who cannot be deported because of dangerous conditions in their home countries) should be given residence permits and the right to work, as they were occupying about 40 percent of the space in the reception centers.

Members of the Dutch parliament expressed little opposition to a bill that would build a special reception center to confine up to 120 asylum seekers at the Schiphol airport in Amsterdam until a decision was made on the admissibility of their asylum claims. A report on the arrival of asylum seekers at European airports prepared for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in September found that asylum seekers landing at Schiphol cannot seek legal or social assistance prior to their interviews.

A total of 744 refugees were resettled in the Netherlands from abroad in 1990, up from 655 resettled in 1989. Most of those resettled originated in Southeast Asia or the Middle East.

Norway

In 1991, Norway received 1,334 applications for asylum, an increase of 607 over 1990. The asylum seekers came from Yugoslavia (1,334), Somalia (731), Sri Lanka (556), Ethiopia (260), and Iran (244).

Norway also committed itself to admit 1,000 "quota" refugees during the year. Quota refugees are referred by UNHCR or are accepted by Norwegian delegations that visit refugee camps. The largest groups of quota refugees accepted in the first half of 1991 were Vietnamese (230), Iranians (177), and Iraqis (96).

In the autumn of 1990, the Norwegian Parliament limited work permits for asylum seekers. Funds for social services for refugees and asylum seekers were also cut. In some communities, funds were so scarce that even recognized refugees with residence permits could no longer enroll in free Norwegian language lessons.

The Norwegian Security Police Chief allowed Israeli Mossad agents to interrogate ten Palestinians seeking asylum in Norway. Since the interrogations took place in Arabic, the Norwegian authorities present did not understand the content of the interviews. The Palestinians maintained that the Israelis offered two individuals bribes to return to the Middle East and act as informers. Because the Norwegians could not dismiss the allegation, the Palestinians all were subsequently granted asylum. As a result of the incident, the Norwegian Security Police Chief resigned.

BELARUS
UKRAINE
RUSSIA
GEORGIA
ARMENIA
AZERBAIJAN
KAZAKHSTAN
UZBEKISTAN
TURKMENISTAN
KIRGHIZIA

Chips off the Old Bloc: Displacement in a Disintegrating USSR

Roger P. Winter

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) ceased to exist in 1991, but problems concerning refugees, displaced people, and "compelled migrants" on the territory of the fifteen republics that formerly constituted the USSR grew substantially during the year. On September 17, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia gained membership in the UN. Eleven of the twelve other republics agreed to form a new union, headquartered in the Belarus capital of Minsk. As yet, however, that "Commonwealth of Independent States" has not proven itself viable. It has been wracked by internal dissension over issues such as control of the former USSR's military and the rights of minorities within its member states.

Nationality is one of the key issues confronting the republics of the old Union. The USSR had some 200 ethnic groups, but only 15 republics. Russia was clearly an imperialistic state before the Bolshevik revolution. However, Stalin's nationality policies laid the groundwork for current tensions by, for example, pursuing Russification of the other republics to bind them to Moscow. Russians were used essentially as colonists in this Soviet-version of imperialism. In many cases, they did not integrate with local culture and society, nor learn the local languages; yet, they held the key positions in industry and government. The Soviets also forcibly relocated millions of people of specific nationalities, particularly after World War II, as a punishment for their perceived lack of loyalty during the war. These included ethnic Germans, Koreans, Tatars, Chechens, Ingush, and others. Equally as problematic, Soviet policy established 38 "autonomous" zones at various levels, delineated by nationality, including 16 within the boundaries of Russia. As the republics seceded from the Soviet Union, the autonomous areas, with mixed political and nationalistic motivations, almost uniformly began to declare their own sovereignty from the republics. The "peripheral" republics, which generally saw little difference between historic Russian imperialism and that of the Soviet Union, believe the authorities of the old Soviet "center" consciously stirred up nationality conflict in autonomous areas in order to frustrate republics' drives towards independence.

As political power shifted, the position of the Red Army became confused but, as always, critical. In most republics, Soviet army units have generally remained in their barracks, though they have had limited roles in the ethnic-political conflicts that have produced most of the republics' current civilian victims. The struggle between Armenians and Azeris for control of Nagorno-Karabakh deteriorated to the point that, at the end of 1991, war between the two newly sovereign republics loomed as inevitable. This inter-ethnic conflict, which has produced well more than 1,000 deaths in recent years, has also produced more than a half million refugees. Both sides have targeted civilians. The entire Azeri population of Armenia has fled, primarily to Azerbaijan, and at least 300,000 Armenians have fled from Azerbaijan, primarily to Armenia and to Russia. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan have established government "refugee affairs" offices and are attempting to resettle the affected populations, a task greatly hampered by the general economic collapse suffered by all republics and by critical housing shortages.

In Georgia, one area of major conflict has been in the autonomous zone of South Ossetia. As Georgia moved toward sovereignty, and the USSR toward dissolution, Zviad Gamsakhurdia was elected president in a landslide vote. His speeches about Georgia being for Georgians, about restricting the use of languages other than Georgian, and about Ossetians being unwanted guests of Georgia contributed

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Roger Winter is director of the U.S. Committee for Refugees.

greatly to the atmosphere of conflict. Authorities in Georgia's capital, Tbilisi, believed, not without reason, that key Soviet officials were involved in destabilizing South Ossetia. Clashes escalated, with inter-ethnic violence between former neighbors becoming commonplace. In addition to a significant number of deaths, more than 100,000 Ossetians became refugees in Russia, primarily in Russia's North Ossetia Autonomous Republic, and 18,000 Georgians who had lived in South Ossetia were displaced into other parts of Georgia, principally Tbilisi. In Georgia, too, the republic created a refugee affairs office to handle the growing problem. Gamsakhurdia himself was driven from power in early 1992 after fighting that destroyed the government center in Tbilisi.

There were numerous other conflicts. The Dniester region of Moldova claimed sovereignty on behalf of its substantial Russian and Ukranian population. Historically, Moldavia was Romanian until the end of World War II, and many non-Romanian Moldovans believe Moldova may eventually unite with Romania, a development they oppose. Also, the leadership of the "Dniester Republic" is essentially old line Soviet-style, heavily influenced by the large number of retired military personnel who live in the region. When Moldovan police attempted to restore Moldova's control over the breakaway region, violence occurred, resulting in at least twelve deaths. At year's end, the situation continued to deteriorate. Elsewhere, conflict was avoided between the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic and Russia when the Russian parliament decided to take a less aggressive approach than President Boris Yeltsin's towards the rebellious leadership there.

All of these conflicts and others contribute to the large streams of migration, especially but not at all exclusively that of ethnic Russians, which had been building before 1991. Hundreds of thousands have left other republics such as Uzbekistan, the Baltics, and even areas of Russia itself, such as the Autonomous Republic of Tuva on the Mongolian border. Non-Russian populations similarly affected include Meskhetian Turks who have been violently displaced from their areas of residence in Uzbekistan. Thousands have been resettled as refugees in Azerbaijan.

People in mixed marriages, who now often feel insecure among either of their nationalities, are inordinately affected by these conflicts, often moving to Moscow or to other large cities outside their home area. With more than 65 million people forcibly or voluntarily outside their "ethnic homelands," including perhaps 25 million Russians, the potential for mass migration is staggering, though republic leaders well recognize the dangers.

Problems of status and terminology plagued authorities' efforts regionwide and internationally to react coherently to these and other uprooted victims of conflict. Most republics have yet to enact statutes defining citizenship, thus obviously not clarifying noncitizen statuses. In general, Russia has enacted a liberal citizenship law that, while providing for ethnic Russians, would permit all residents of republics of the former Union to obtain citizenship in the Russian republic. "Compelled migrants" would refer to Russian citizens forced to move from other republics to resettle and remain in Russia. "Refugees" would refer to those non-Russian citizens who need asylum in Russia, and who may return home when circumstances permit. Displaced people might be uprooted in a number of circumstances, including from autonomous zones inside Russia. These latter statutes exist in draft form, and enactment is expected in the spring of 1992.

In October and November 1991, USCR conducted a site visit in Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia to assess humanitarian needs and capacities generally, with particular reference to displaced populations. Visits were made to conflict areas of Nagorno-Karabakh and South Ossetia. USCR has been active in mobilizing U.S.-based nongovernmental organizations to respond to these matters, in particular to assist the republics in developing a legal framework for protecting and assisting refugees and displaced persons.

Ambiguity regarding the republics' sovereignty further confused matters. Most did not yet hold United Nations membership, and their sovereignty was not generally recognized until the dissolution of the Union. Consequently, those in flight arguably had not crossed an international border. As sovereignty becomes recognized, the relevance of the 1951 Refugee Convention becomes clearer. UNHCR moved very slowly to open a small office in Moscow by year's end, but generally played only a minor role in these matters in 1991. Its role in 1992 will be of critical importance, as will that of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which signed a significant agreement with the Russian Federation in March 1992.

Thus, fledgling republics embroiled in economic collapse and political controversy struggled to confront their "refugee" problems essentially alone. Their task was complicated by an almost total lack of resources. Armenian authorities, who are still seeking to house the victims of their destructive 1988 earthquake, told USCR that properly housing rural refugees will likely take five years, while housing urban-oriented refugees, given current housing production rates, will take twenty years. This contributes to the rationale of many from that conflict who decide to become compelled migrants in Russia. Aggregations of refugees, unable to live with relatives, are becoming concentrated in sections of Moscow and other major cities. Given the overall economic climate, the resentment of local residents is noticeable and building. This is a serious matter, because obtaining local government registration is the key to local integration in the republics; it unlocks government services for the individual or family. But local officials are beholden to local residents rather than newcomers. Thus, many refugees and compelled migrants are currently without access to schools, medical care, and other services.

For some, the goal became leaving what remained of the Soviet Union altogether. This opportunity generally has been available only to those with pre-existing ties outside the Soviet Union, such as ethnic Germans, Greeks, Jews, and Armenians. For example, about 160,000 ethnic Germans left for Germany in 1991. This opportunity to travel and live abroad will be extended to all citizens according to a new emigration law passed by the Soviet parliament on May 20. The Law on Entry and Exit, as the measure was called, is not scheduled to come into full force until January 1, 1993, when exit permits will no longer be required for those wishing to leave. The law sets a five-year limit on exit restrictions based on would-be emigrants' knowledge of state secrets, a barrier that has stood in the way of "refuseniks" who have previously been denied exit visas.

Certain provisions of the new law went into effect on July 1, for example, the issuing of passports, so that Soviet Jews going to Israel would not lose their citizenship upon entering Israel. The bureaucracy was slow in catching up with the legal changes, however, and delays occurred among those waiting for travel documents. A total of 167,000 Jews left for Israel during the year, fewer than had been anticipated. Although the United States had agreed to take 50,000 Soviets under the U.S. refugee admissions program, and had interviewed and accepted enough to meet that number, only 38,661, including about 20 percent Evangelical Christians and other non-Jewish groups, were admitted, due to bureaucratic delays in Moscow.

In October, President Mikhail Gorbachev expressed regret that "gifted and enterprising" Soviet Jews were emigrating, and attributed their leaving to anti-semitism, which, he said, was still a part of "everyday life" in the country.

Poland

In September, Poland became the 109th nation to sign the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, putting further distance between its past history as a producer of refugees and its future aspirations. But Poland's present remained clouded in 1991; a new set of economic problems—high prices and unemployment—and political uncertainty (in the first parliamentary elections in October, the former communists and their allies won 30 percent of the vote, twice that garnered by the party representing the Solidarity movement) made Poles feel anything but stable and secure.

With the end of communist rule in Poland, exit permit requirements were abolished, and Poles could readily obtain passports for foreign travel in 1991. From 1988 to the end of 1991, nearly 900,000 Poles have emigrated, according to the Ministry of Interior. In April, Schengen states (France, Germany, the Benelux countries, and Italy—Spain and Portugal didn't become full members of Schengen until June) agreed to allow Germany to drop visa requirements for Poles on condition that Poland agree to accept the return of any Poles who overstay the three month visas or who enter any of the Schengen states without permission.

Switzerland separately entered into a similar agreement with Poland in September. With the dropping of visas, Switzerland has also announced that Poles will be ineligible to apply for asylum.

As some of Poland's neighbors to its west have feared an influx of Poles with the lifting of Polish exit restrictions, so, too, has Poland shown some trepidation at the prospect of the lifting of exit restrictions in the countries to its east, particularly the former Soviet Union, with whom it shares a 600-mile, porous border. Fearing a possible mass influx from the disintegrating Soviet Union, Poland announced that its eastern border force would be increased from 360 to about 5,000 guards. Poland also imposed certain entry restrictions on Romanians.

But Poland's stance has also shown regard for those seeking asylum. In January 1991, the government created an Office for Refugees within the Ministry of Interior. At that time, there were 540 refugees and asylum seekers registered in the country, with Ethiopia and Lebanon the two largest source countries. As of March, the Office for Refugees was operating six camps for asylum seekers holding about 450 people. During the year, Poland was trying to understand its new role as a country of asylum, to develop an adjudicatory framework, and to decide how to handle humanitarian cases that might not fit within the Refugee Convention standard for determining refugee status. In December, the government promulgated regulations for implementing its accession to the Refugee Convention and Protocol, leaving to 1992 implementation and further refinement of its asylum procedure. A total of 2,450 applied for asylum in Poland in 1991.

Sweden

Asylum applicants in 1991 numbered 27,323, compared to a total of 29,418 in 1990. Yugoslav applicants, numbering 13,224, eclipsed Iranians as the largest group of asylum seekers. The decrease in asylum applicants allowed Sweden to relax its asylum policy somewhat. Restrictions put in place in December 1989 limiting the right of asylum to those who not only closely fit the 1951 Geneva Convention "well-founded fear of persecution" definition but also had "a specially strong need for protection" in Sweden were lifted in December 1991.

In other changes, a decision that allowed asylum seekers to work only after a six month wait for the outcome of their applications was amended to allow those awaiting decisions for three months or more to obtain temporary work permits. Families who have resided in Sweden for more than 18 months were granted asylum with some exceptions. The Board of Immigration is also working to cut the average waiting time for asylum decisions from six months to two, and to speed up appeals. The newly formed Aliens Board will begin to deal with a backlog of 8,000 appeals beginning in January 1992.

The government has instituted a tough new policy designed to curb the number of rejected applicants who go into hiding. In November 1991, of the 3,400 applicants who had been denied asylum, 2,333 remained in Sweden. Beginning on November 14, 1991, an attorney or other interested representative can no longer learn the results of an appeal and report it to an asylum seeker. The asylum seeker can only hear the result from the head of a refugee camp, where he or she may be taken into custody for immediate deportation. This practice appears to contravene Swedish law, which allows an applicant two weeks to leave the country voluntarily.

The backlash against foreigners characterized in 1990 by harassment and vandalism aimed at several refugee reception centers expressed itself in the political arena in 1991 in the election of the first members of the New Democracy Party to Parliament. The Party charged that both economic migrants and asylum seekers threatened Sweden's stability. However, two extremist parties, The Sweden Democrats, with roots in the Keep Sweden Swedish movement, and the anti-immigrant Sjobo Party were unsuccessful in electing members to Parliament.

In August 1991, Sweden's Social Democrat-led government returned Romanian asylum seekers, primarily gypsies, to Poland. The Romanians feared persecution in Poland following an incident in July in Mlawa, Poland when Poles burned the homes of local gypsies.

A Bangladeshi asylum seeker forcibly repatriated by the Swedes on October 10, 1990 was arrested upon arrival at Dhaka airport, beaten, and tortured for thirteen hours, according to Amnesty International.

Switzerland

On its 700th anniversary, Switzerland was in danger of losing its historical reputation as a haven for refugees, due to increasingly restrictive barriers to would-be asylum seekers, a steep drop in the percentage of asylum applications granted, and growing xenophobia.

Some 41,629 persons registered for asylum in 1991, a 16 percent increase over 1990. This continues an upward trend—despite Swiss efforts to counteract it—throughout the late 1980s. The fall in asylum approval rates has been as consistent as the rise in the number of asylum seekers. In 1991, only 3 percent of asylum claims were granted. In 1984, when 7,435 asylum applications were registered, and the approval rate stood at 24.4 percent, restrictive measures were introduced, including limits on appeal of denied cases and termination of automatic employment authorization for asylum seekers. In 1988, when the number of applications had risen to 16,726, a new set of restrictive measures were introduced. These, called the Verfahren laws, subjected undocumented asylum seekers to accelerated procedures, further limited the right to work, shortened the period of appeal, and instituted a return to "first country of asylum."

Between Novem~~ber 1988~~ and November 1989, nationals of Turkey, Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Pakistan, and India were subjected to the accelerated procedure on the basis of having "presumably chanceless" asylum claims.

In 1990, when the number of asylum seekers had risen to 35,836, and the approval rate had fallen to 4.9 percent, another revision of the asylum law dropped several of the more draconian provisions of the Verfahren laws, including the "presumably chanceless" designation, and Verfahren's requirement that asylum seekers file their claims at designated border posts. But the 1990 law stiffened other aspects of the asylum process. It authorized the federal authorities not to recognize as asylum seekers nationals of designated countries "where violations of human rights are legally dealt with."

As a result of this provision, Poles, Hungarians, and Czechs were excluded from the asylum procedure altogether starting in 1990, unless they were able to show convincing evidence of fear of persecution. On March 18, 1991, Algeria, Bulgaria, and India were added to the list of safe countries. Even after mass arrests in Algeria in June 1991 and the declaration of a state of siege, Algeria remained on Switzerland's list of safe countries. Under the revised law, access to the asylum procedure could also be blocked on several other grounds, including having the option of traveling to another safe country that, according to international conventions, is responsible for making a determination. The 1990 asylum law also imposed an initial three-month work ban on asylum applicants. To speed up the procedure itself, the law also imposed time limits into each phase of the adjudicatory process.

On June 27, 1991, the Swiss Federal Council adopted a series of new measures to deter asylum requests, directing that as many applications as possible should be ruled ineligible and that the list of safe countries should be expanded. The measures would also reduce the asylum procedure to six months and increase the work ban from three months to six, if the asylum seeker receives a negative decision within three months of applying. It was also announced that visas would be imposed on nationals of Yugoslavia, the source of the largest number of asylum seekers in 1991.

During 1991, more than 70 acts of violence were committed against asylum seekers in Switzerland. Four reception centers in Bern were attacked repeatedly during the last quarter of 1990, culminating in a Christmas night molotov cocktail attack on one of the reception centers. The following night, a dozen shots were fired at a center for asylum seekers in Vaud. In October, the anti-immigrant Auto Party won eight seats in the 200-member lower house of Parliament with the campaign slogan, "How many did you expel this week?" The Party advocates the deployment of the army at Swiss borders to prevent unauthorized immigration.

At year's end, some 51,284 asylum cases were pending, as well as 10,407 cases on appeal.

Turkey

Turkey was headline news in April 1991, as hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees gathered at its southeastern border seeking asylum. The image of Kurdish refugees clinging to the sides of mountains and scrambling after food dropped from planes stirred the world's conscience and resulted in the unprecedented intervention of allied forces in northern Iraq to create a security zone on behalf of the refugees.

As the focus on Iraq intensified, less attention was paid to the relatively smaller numbers actually sheltered on Turkish soil.

Iraqi refugee influxes into Turkey can be divided into several distinct groups. The largest remaining group, 19,484, as of the end of 1991, are the earliest arrivals, the Kurds who entered in 1988, when some 60,000 fled chemical weapons attacks in Iraq.

About 6,000 remain of 8,000 who entered between August and September 1990, the first stage of the Gulf War, after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. They are mostly living outside camps with temporary residence permits in Kayseri, Van, and Sivas. A significant portion of this group are Assyrian Christians who were among the first of Iraq's own citizens to leave Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait. Temporary residence permit holders generally have a family sponsor and put up a cash bond of about $600. The six-month permits were due to expire late in 1991, and it was feared that they would not be renewed. However, the Turkish authorities assured private international agencies that members of this group would not be expelled, while at the same time saying that third countries should agree to resettle them. The United States has indicated a willingness to resettle about 2,000.

The smallest contingent of 4,079 is the best known, the remnant of an estimated 452,000 who massed at the border at the height of the refugee crisis in April 1991 after Iraqi forces crushed the Kurdish revolt in the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War.

Turkey's accession to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention carries a geographical limitation recognizing as refugees only those who have fled from Europe. Consequently, Turkey has not officially recognized the Iraqi Kurds as refugees, complicating assistance and protection on their behalf.

The first and largest group, the 1988 Kurdish arrivals, have been held in three camps in southeastern Turkey—Diyarbakir, with 7,053 inhabitants; Kiziltepe (near Mardin) with a population of about 8,086, and Mus, holding 4,345. Conditions in all three camps have been poor and relations between the refugees and Turkish authorities have been strained.

The authorities have kept a close watch on all three camps, which have been guarded and surrounded by barbed wire. Although the government has blocked access to these camps by private refugee agencies and human rights groups, former residents have testified to USCR about a strict regimen, including frequent beatings by guards, allegations of mass food poisoning, and strict limits on movement in and out.

Shortly before the outbreak of the war, refugees from Diyarbakir allege that 105 refugees from the camp were turned over to the Iraqi intelligence services, and have not been heard from since. Among them were two prominent leaders, Mohammed Simo and Mohammed Abu Zaid. After their "disappearance", fear gripped the remaining refugees, who felt more isolated and vulnerable than ever. Contact with Western governments interested in resettling some portion of the Diyarbakir population had been broken off due to the war. During the next several months, at least 825, and as many as 3,000, Diyarbakir residents bribed their way out of the camp and fled to Greece. From there, refugees report, many traveled to Germany to seek asylum.

Several thousand of the refugees from the 1988 contingent joined the mass flow of Kurds returning to Iraq, when the newer arrivals from the spring of 1991 came down from the mountains to the safe haven zone in northern Iraq. Also, late in 1991, the process of resettling refugees from the 1988 flow to third countries, including the United States, began again, after being suspended during the war. By year's end, hundreds of refugees were beginning to arrive in the United States and other resettlement countries. The Turkish government considered the resettlement offers from the West, however, as too little, too late. It also criticized international offers to contribute to refugee assistance in Turkey. The government turned down an offer of $14 million in 1990 to help relocate the refugees from Kiziltepe, Mardin, where they were still living in tents, into permanent shelters in Yozgat Province east of Ankara. Although the government took the position that the international assistance offers were insufficient to effect the transfer, local opposition to the presence of Kurdish refugees was certainly another factor that helped scuttle the plan.

At the outset of the 1991 crisis, in April, the Turkish government decided not to repeat what they saw as their mistake in 1988, when, in the Turkish view, they received plenty of criticism from Western countries for their treatment of the Kurdish refugees, but very little support. In announcing the decision not to admit the Kurds, but instead to provide "humanitarian aid" at the border, Turkish Minister of State Kamran Inan said, "The world did nothing then [i.e., after 1988] to help us house and feed the refugees." Turkey had already lost millions of dollars in trade with Iraq as a result of the Gulf War, and the prospect of supporting a half million refugees looked like a potentially monumental burden on the economy, particularly since the refugees were approaching the country's poorest and most remote region. Security concerns also influenced the decision, as Turkey faced an armed insurgency among its own Kurdish minority population concentrated in the southeast.

In early April 1991, the landscape on the sides of those mountains was one of chaos—mud, smoke, crowds, litter. Following days of walking under extremely harsh conditions, the refugees congregated in places exposed to the wind and cold with no sanitary facilities or fresh water other than the pounding, cold rain that froze at night. Most were concentrated in two areas, near Uludere and Cukurca. South of the town of Uludere, they huddled on the side of a steep mountain, nearly inaccessible to relief convoys because the dirt roads leading to it had been washed away in heavy rains. Any who ventured more than a hundred yards or so into Turkey were pushed back by Turkish soldiers, firing warning shots in the air.

A staff report issued by the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Affairs in May said, "If the refugees had been permitted to cross the border—even by half a mile—to enter more hospitable Turkish valleys and facilities, some of the tragic loss of life could have been minimized during those desperate early days in April."

Further to the east, near Cukurca, tens of thousands of refugees gathered on another inhospitable mountainside. A field just inside the Iraqi side of the border post was quickly cleared and converted into a muddy tent city. Health conditions all long the border were poor. The refugees, arriving exhausted, found a near absence of shelter, sanitary facilities, clothing, food, clean water, or medicine. In the first week of April, the Turkish Foreign Ministry estimated that 1,500 Iraqi children died on the journey. Additional scores, mostly infants and young children, reportedly died after reaching the border, succumbing to diarrhea, hunger, and exposure.

On April 7, U.S. cargo planes began dropping C-rations, bottled water, food, blankets, tents, and medicines. On that same day, the first relief convoy also arrived in Cukurca. During the next few weeks, aid continued to arrive, the weather turned drier, and conditions improved, but food distribution was still haphazard—trucks dumping bread would precipitate mini-riots, causing waste, disruption, and uneven distribution. In one tragic incident, two children and a pregnant woman were among at least seven refugees who were killed when a wooden crate of relief supplies landed on them. Even after supplies began to arrive at the mountain camps, basic sanitation was still lacking and clean water remained scarce; the refugees often had to melt snow for potable water.

On April 11, USCR issued a press release saying that the UN estimate of the need for 90-day emergency assistance was at least $400 million, and that the U.S. government had contributed $11 million. USCR called the U.S. contribution "painfully inadequate" and called for an immediate pledge of at least $200 million.

By mid-April, the United States began deploying U.S. troops, ships, and aircraft in a concerted relief operation dubbed "Operation Provide Comfort," which rapidly became the largest relief effort in modern U.S. military history and resulted in the transfer of most of the refugees into the allied "safe haven" zone in northern Iraq.

As Operation Provide Comfort began, the Turkish authorities relented from their strict policy of preventing refugees from moving inside Turkey, and began to transfer the most severely sick or injured, pregnant women, and small children from the mountain encampments to the more protected, Turkish inland camp at Silopi. Silopi, a converted rest stop for hajj pilgrims to Mecca, is located at the far western end of the Iraq-Turkish border, about 3 miles inland on a lowland plain.

While the process for determining which refugees would be transferred to Silopi appeared to have been left, in part, to Kurdish clan leaders themselves, others who were permitted to move farther inland to more secure camps reportedly included some members of non-Kurdish minority groups, principally Turkomans, an ethnic Turkish minority in Iraq, and Assyrian Christians.

Turkish authorities began concentrating Iraqi army deserters in Silopi, as well. By year's end, the Silopi camp population was about half Kurd, half Christian; it included 622 army-deserters and 3,457 civilians, nearly half of whom were children under the age of 14.

Silopi was ill-prepared for the approach of winter, and heaters had still not been installed in mid-December. As a result of the cold and lack of medicines, children in the camp were becoming ill.

The safe haven zone inside Iraq allowed an extraordinarily rapid and massive repatriation from Turkey and the border. Towards the end of May, more than 10,000 refugees per day were transiting back to Iraq, mostly through the Zakho area. By the end of May, 30,700 refugees remained in three camps, Cukurca (18,000), Semdinli (5,500), and Silopi (7,200). With the warmer late spring weather, continuing sanitation problems at Cukurca posed an increased risk of rapid spread of infectious diseases. In early June, Cukurca was evacuated and closed, and the total refugee population remaining in Turkey was 13,400 (excluding pre-March 1991 arrivals).

By June 22, the Silopi camp population had dropped to 6,674 refugees, who clearly balked at repatriating. Many had some special status that gave hope for third-country resettlement: relatives in the West; professional skills; Christian faith. Having survived the chill mountain winds of the winter, the refugees in the lowland Silopi camp then had to endure the summer heat in camp tents that seemed to absorb air and sunlight alike. By the end of 1991, 4,079 refugees remained at Silopi.

Iranians in Turkey Iranians are the least visible refugee group in Turkey. Like Iraqis, they are specifically excluded from official recognition as refugees by Turkey's geographical reservation to the 1951 Refugee Convention, but unlike the Iraqis, they are not confined in camps, and are therefore not counted. In fact, for the most part, they are ignored. Estimates of the Iranian exile population in Turkey continue to range as high as one million, based largely on their large concentrations in parts of certain cities.

Although visitors comment on the ever-present lines of Iranians at the UNHCR office in Ankara, relatively few actually apply for refugee recognition by UNHCR.

UNHCR reported that 1,619 Iranians sought its protection in 1990, slightly more than the 1,403 who approached the office in 1989. In 1991, 1,970 Iranians sought UNHCR recognition. It recognized 1,484 as refugees in 1991, although this represented applicants from 1990 as well as 1991. About two-thirds of Iranian cases decided during the year by UNHCR were approved.

Iranians who carry valid passports may enter without a visa and stay as tourists for three consecutive months. They often renew their permission to stay by crossing back and forth from Bulgaria or Cyprus. Turkey fines those who overstay their tourist visas, but generally does not expel them.

UNHCR registered the undocumented Iranians who approached its office in Ankara, but they had to be interviewed by the Ankara police before UNHCR was permitted to go forward with determining refugee status. Undocumented Iranians whom UNHCR recognizes as refugees are required to reside in cities assigned to them by the government. They must sign in weekly with the local police. Undocumented Iranians apprehended inside Turkey prior to registering with UNHCR or at the border were generally sent back to Iran.

In March, Turkish police detained and reportedly mistreated a group of ten Iranians, all of whom UNHCR had recognized as refugees. USCR estimates that at least 10 percent of Iranians in Turkey are there because of a well-founded fear of persecution in Iran, even if they are prevented or discouraged from making asylum claims.

United Kingdom

The 44,745 asylum applications received by the United Kingdom in 1991, about a fifty percent increase over 1990, continued an upward trend of several years in the number applying. The 30,000 asylum applications filed in 1990 in turn doubled the 15,530 filed in 1989, which tripled the 5,000 filed in 1988. Britain was also facing a backlog of about 40,000 cases, and, in October, when the government introduced a new, restrictive Alien Bill, the adjudication process was taking an average of 14 months.

Through the first half of 1991, Zaireans and Angolans were the two largest nationality groups seeking asylum in the U.K. Applications from Ugandans dropped after visa requirements were imposed. The Carrier's Liability Act of 1987, under which airlines that bring aliens with improper documents into the U.K. are fined, continued to generate controversy in 1991. In August, the £1,000 per passenger fines were raised to £2,000 (about $3,400) per passenger. Even so, only about half of the total fines levied had been paid by airlines. Airlines are also liable for fines up to £2,000 for allowing transit passengers from six "troublesome" nationalities—Iranians, Lebanese, Libyans, Somalis, Syrians, and Turks—even to speak to an immigration officer during stopovers.

The fear of fines has resulted in cases where airline personnel have prevented would-be asylum seekers from disembarking, and forcibly returned them without their ever having an opportunity to claim asylum. Amnesty International reported two incidents that occurred in April 1990, involving two groups of Sri Lankans intending to seek asylum in the U.K. who were detained by airline staff and forced onto flights out of the country without having had their asylum claims considered.

On October 30, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the British government did not violate the Human Rights Convention when it deported five Tamils in 1988. According to British asylum procedures, rejected asylum seekers can file appeals only after being expelled. Three of the Tamils, who appealed the negative decisions while in Sri Lanka, were arrested and ill-treated upon return to Sri Lanka, while their appeals were pending. On appeal, they were found to have a well-founded fear of persecution, and permitted to return to the U.K. Over objections of the government, the five were readmitted to the U.K., but were not granted asylum.

The United Kingdom has been less enthusiastic than some of its EC neighbors in efforts to harmonize asylum policies, wanting to maintain firm control over whom it admits and showing reluctance about boosting the power of the European Parliament. Britain delayed signing the Convention on the crossing of external borders, which would harmonize border control procedures throughout the EC, because of a disagreement with Spain over the application of the Convention in Gibraltar.

A new asylum bill was being debated in the House of Commons, and passed that body by a 78-vote margin in November. The bill would require asylum seekers to establish that they had first sought safety from persecution in another part of their home country or in a neighboring country before seeking refuge in the U.K. But it also included a "safe country" provision that activates an accelerated procedure—48 hours, with no appeal—for asylum seekers coming from countries where it is determined they can be returned and not be persecuted. Under the bill, other cases would be decided within four weeks, and appeals of negative decisions would be decided within 42 days. Denied asylum seekers would be given two days to submit a written application for an appeal. A special adjudicator would then determine within five days whether the case for appeal is "arguable" and whether an oral hearing should be granted.

The asylum bill would not require a face-to-face hearing with the initial adjudicator, and would make the application for appeal solely in writing, so that asylum seekers could be expelled without the opportunity of presenting their cases in person to the adjudicators.

The bill would also require all asylum applicants to be fingerprinted, and would make those who refuse fingerprinting subject to arrest. It would also require applicants to apply for asylum immediately upon arriving in the U.K.

The new bill also would cut back on current levels of legal and social support for asylum seekers. Under current practice, asylum seekers can choose their own lawyers for their first hearing under the U.K.'s legal aid system. The asylum bill, however, would remove legal aid support to independent attorneys taking on asylum cases and instead create a monopoly service through one government-funded agency for legal representation. The bill would also deny legal representation altogether in cases deemed to involve national security risks. On the social level, it would place the burden on asylum seekers to prove that they had nowhere else to sleep before being accommodated by local authorities.

By year's end, the Alien Bill had not had its second reading before the House of Lords, and there were indications that action on the bill could be suspended until after general elections.

Treatment of Vietnamese asylum seekers in Britain's colony, Hong Kong, continued to be a matter of controversy in 1991, as Hong Kong resumed the forced return of denied asylum seekers to Vietnam (see Hong Kong). The U.K. has participated in international refugee resettlement programs on a very limited basis. Most of the 18,638 Southeast Asian refugees resettled in the U.K. from 1975 through 1990 came during the 1979–1981 period, and were drawn almost exclusively from the camps of its colony, Hong Kong. On a per capita basis, the U.K. resettled far fewer Southeast Asians than most other West European states.

Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia was torn apart in 1991. By year's end, the civil war pitting Serbs against Croatians resulted in an estimated 10,000 deaths and the displacement of some 557,000 inside what had been Yugoslavia and another 58,000 into Hungary, Austria, and Italy.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) launched its first appeal for 90,000 displaced persons in the Yugoslav civil war on August 23, a figure that surprised the international community because it doubled an estimate made earlier that month of the number of displaced.

When USCR visited Yugoslavia in October, the number of internally displaced had mushroomed to more than 300,000, and the first tens of thousands had already crossed into Hungary. At that time, host countries on all sides of the conflict were responding positively to the refugees. Fewer than 10 percent of the refugees and displaced persons were being housed in public accommodations. The overwhelming majority of the displaced were being cared for in private homes.

In many cases, this represented the support of personal friends and family. Most of the people fleeing dangerous areas had relatives and close friends outside immediate conflict areas. Also, because of the nationalist nature of the conflict, compatriots opened their homes at least in part as an expression of national and ethnic solidarity. Most of the internally displaced gravitated from areas that had been mixed populations of Serbs and Croats to areas where their own ethnic group was more homogeneous. More than 300,000 displaced Croatians—representing 55 percent of the total displaced population—moved into solidly Croatian areas. The same picture emerged on the Serbian side, where 134,000 displaced Serbs from Croatia moved into Serbia, of whom 81,000 are in central Serbia, mostly in the Belgrade area.

However, the rate of arrival, the sheer numbers, and the duration of homelessness—six months for some by the close of the year—eroded the ability of local communities to sustain assistance for them. In October, after staying with private families who could no longer support them, refugees were beginning to seek out public accommodations. Sources in Yugoslavia estimated in December that the proportion of displaced persons being housed in collective accommodations had grown to as high as 40 percent.

Croatian National Guardsmen drag a would-be refugee off the last ship attempting to leave the besieged Croatian city of Dubrovnik because he was a male of military age. AFP

The displaced population in almost all cases represented split families, with husbands, fathers, and brothers staying behind to fight. Females comprised an estimated 67 percent of the displaced population within Yugoslavia. The elderly made up to 10 to 15 percent of the displaced, and the percentage of children and teens were thought to be as high as 50 percent.

After Vukovar fell on November 18, journalists who visited the town reported near- total destruction after three months of intense shelling. Few, if any, of Vukovar's 50,000 inhabitants before the war would have habitable homes to return to.

By November, Serbian authorities had begun a mass transfer of Serbian displaced persons into the Baranja region, a triangle in eastern Croatia created by the Drava and Danube rivers and the Hungarian border, which at that point was under complete Serbian control. Some 20,000 Serbian displaced persons who had fled from farming villages in western Slavonia located between the towns of Virovitica and Daruvar were now being bused to abandoned Croatian homes in Baranja. *The Washington Post* reported on November 25 that the Yugoslav army had sealed the borders of Baranja, effectively preventing the return of Croatian and ethnic Hungarian refugees.

Although overshadowed by the monumental displacement of citizens of what has been Yugoslavia, there remained thousands of persons seeking asylum in Yugoslavia in 1991 whose treatment by that country fell far short of the minimal standards for refugee protection.

Any asylum seeker who enters Yugoslavia without proper documents is subject to up to 30 days imprisonment for "illegal entry," usually served in small jails in border areas. Asylum seekers expelled from Austria and Italy fare no better, as they are subject to imprisonment for "illegal exit." During their imprisonment, the asylum seekers have no access to legal counsel nor to UNHCR. Yet during this period, some form of asylum pre-screening takes place.

Those who are not screened in are deported after serving their sentences. Screened out asylum seekers are generally deported to Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, or Hungary without ever having seen UNHCR. Until June 1990, Albanians caught for unauthorized exit were subject to a minimum 10-year prison sentence or a maximum death penalty. In January 1991, the government forcibly returned 368 Albanians to Albania without allowing them the option of presenting their refugee claims to UNHCR.

Little is known about the pre-screening procedures or authorities. One indication of their inadequacy, however, is that no person originating from Turkey has ever been screened in. Asylum seekers from Turkey, including those returned from Italy and Austria on the assumption that Yugoslavia respects the principle of *nonrefoulement*, appear to be subject to automatic deportation.

Those who are screened in are transferred to Padinska Skela, a closed federal detention center outside Belgrade, where they can be held indefinitely without legal recourse. Persons who have been incarcerated in Padinska Skela say that it is worse than the local jails. Former inmates report overcrowding, minimal accommodations, inadequate food, a lack of communication and recreational facilities, and brutality by guards. Some allege that they were beaten to force them to sign voluntary departure forms. Although Padinska Skela only has a capacity for about 150, it generally was holding about 400 during 1991, resulting in several persons being assigned to a single bed, and forced to sleep in shifts. In January 1991, 950 persons were being held in Padinska Skela.

From Padinska Skela, however, asylum seekers generally are allowed to contact UNHCR. These tasks are left to the UNHCR office in Belgrade. Those asylum seekers who are screened in during their month of detention for illegal entry or illegal exit are then referred to the UNHCR office. Asylum seekers with proper travel documents are also permitted to approach the UNHCR office directly.

Although Yugoslavia has signed the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, the authorities refuse to take responsibility for finally determining refugee status or for assisting recognized refugees. The government refuses to grant refugees permanent residency, insists that they be resettled in third countries, and refuses to contribute to their basic needs for food and housing. Recognized refugees are not permitted to work, are ineligible for government-subsidized health care, and are not allowed to send their children to school. UNHCR, therefore, bears all the costs for those it recognizes as refugees. UNHCR in 1991 was paying for seven centers to accommodate up to 1,200 refugees at an annual cost of about $4 million. No private agencies have been permitted to assist with the refugees.

In October, USCR visited one of these centers, the Avala camp outside Belgrade, where third country nationals recognized by UNHCR as refugees were being housed. At that time, 130 refugees were living there. Conditions were adequate, but dreary. Adults who had attempted to leave the camp as day laborers had been arrested and deported. The refugees themselves were attempting to teach their children. Refugees complained about the amount and quality of the food, about boredom and not being allowed to work or study, about lack of warm clothing, and, most of all, about the dim prospects for third country resettlement.

The remaining 600 or so UNHCR-recognized Albanian refugees in Yugoslavia have almost no chance for third country resettlement. For example, the United States will only process those with ties to the United States, which is rare among Albanians who have been cut off from the outside world for decades. And they also have no chance to regularize their status in Yugoslavia.

Very few Albanians entered Yugoslavia during the last half of 1991 because the army was heavily deployed on the Albanian-Yugoslav border. In September, ten persons were shot and killed while attempting to cross into Yugoslavia.

Albanians remained the largest group of asylum seekers in 1991. Iraqis represented the second largest group, as Yugoslavia does not require a visa from that country. Most arrived with valid passports. The Iraqi asylum seekers were about equally divided among Shi'ites, Kurds, and Christians. But this group, too, has had poor luck in being resettled. Many do have relatives in the United States, but U.S. policy has been to designate Belgrade only as a processing post for East Europeans, thus excluding Iraqis, Sri Lankans, Somalis, and other non-European nationalities. The irony is that the United States has dropped all East European countries except Albanians with U.S.-ties from its list of countries of designated humanitarian concern for refugee processing, with the result that many bona fide refugees in need of resettlement are being excluded.

In 1991, 1,616 persons applied to the UNHCR office for refugee status. Of the 825 applicants recognized as refugees in 1991, 734, or 89 percent, were Albanian.

In 1990, 2,462 applied for refugee status recognition with the UNHCR office in Belgrade; the number in 1989 was 7,112.

An exception to the general treatment of asylum seekers occurred in March and April 1991 with the arrival of two large groups of Albanians with ethnic ties in Yugoslavia. First, in March, a group of about 1,200 Albanians of Montenegrin origin massed on the border of the Yugoslav republic of Montenegro outside Titograd. Later, a group of about 600 ethnic Macedonians from Albania did the same thing. The two republics admitted the refugees directly and never referred them to UNHCR. After holding both groups in camps for a period of time, Yugoslavia recognized about 1,400 Montenegrins as refugees and indicated plans to resettle them in Kosovo, a heavily ethnic Albanian region of Serbia. Resettling them there was seen as consistent with a Serbian strategy to tip the ethnic balance in Kosovo away from ethnic Albanians. The ethnic Macedonians were housed in relatively comfortable, and costly, surroundings, but little effort was made to place them in jobs or to integrate them into Macedonia. By October, about 250 of the Montenegrins had voluntarily returned to Albania.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Belize

Belize hosts some 12,000 officially recognized refugees, of whom 71 percent are Salvadoran and 26 percent are Guatemalan. An estimated 28,000 undocumented aliens, many of whom can be considered refugees, also live in Belize. The nearly 40,000 refugees and people in refugee-like circumstances living in Belize account for 20 percent of the country's total population.

There are no refugee camps in Belize. However, almost half of the registered refugees live in an official refugee settlement, the Valley of Peace, funded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the European Community. The Belizean government considers the settlement successful, and plans to expand it. The remaining registered refugees and others in refugee-like circumstances are dispersed throughout the country, mainly in rural areas.

While many of the refugees fill gaps in the labor force, the Belizean government says that their large number strains the country's financial and social resources, particularly health and educational facilities.

Colombia

Advances in the past year toward a peace settlement between Colombia's democratically elected government and leftist guerrillas lifted hopes for a lessening of the violence that has forced at least 150,000 people to flee their homes since 1980.

However, two new reports on internal displacement stress that the bombardments, guerrilla warfare, and paramilitary and military attacks that cause displacement continue throughout central and northwestern Colombia, especially in Magdalena Medio and the departments of Cordoba, Cundinamarca, and Meta. Between January and May 1991, 233 Colombians were murdered for political reasons, another 574 were assassinated for allegedly political reasons, 174 were victims of "social clean-up" operations, and 68 were "disappeared".

More than 200,000 Peruvians have fled their homes because of political violence. Many are living in tal. Even there, however, they—and those who try to assist them—are not safe. Vera A. Lentz

Some of the displaced have moved into slums near urban centers. In April 1991, a mission sponsored by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) interviewed displaced families in Ciudad Bolivar, a Bogota shantytown. ICVA noted that they were subject to continuing hardship and violence, especially the "social cleansing" campaigns carried out by police and local traders. Others remain in towns near their homes, sheltering in schools, churches, and municipal buildings.

The Colombian Coordinating Committee of Human Rights, War Victims, and Refugees, and several regional groups, sponsors projects for emergency shelter, job generation, and organized return. But Colombians who work with internally displaced people continue to be targets of violent attacks. For instance, on February 26, 1991, two assassins believed to be hired by paramilitaries beat, stabbed, and shot to death Jose Alcides Castrillon, a leader of the Bogota-based Association of Social Assistance

(ASCODAS), a group made up of displaced people. Castrillon is the third national leader of ASCODAS to be killed since 1989. A human rights group in Barrancabermeja that works with internally displaced lost three members in 1991.

shanty towns in and near Lima, the Peruvian capi-

Colombians from the departments of Norte de Santander, which borders Venezuela, and Putumayo, which borders Ecuador, often seek refuge in those countries. Although most are said to be seeking better job possibilities, UNHCR has indicated that some 4,000 Colombians in Ecuador may be "of concern" (see Ecuador). Wealthier Colombians have also sought political asylum in Europe.

Costa Rica

Some 12,000 Nicaraguan refugees, almost all of whom had been living in Costa Rica without official refugee status, repatriated in 1991. Since the ouster of the Sandinista government in elections held in Nicaragua in February 1990, more than 18,750 Nicaraguans are known to have repatriated from Costa Rica (other Nicaraguans, primarily from among the unregistered refugee population, may also have repatriated by their own means). More than 200 Salvadoran refugees living in Nicaragua also repatriated in 1991.

An estimated 20,000 Nicaraguans and 4,000 Salvadoran refugees remain in Costa Rica. There are also some 80,000 other Central Americans living in Costa Rica in refugee-like circumstances.

Traditionally, Costa Rica has enjoyed a favorable reputation as a refugee-hosting country. For many years, it provided safe haven for asylum seekers from throughout Latin America. In early 1990, the Costa Rican Supreme Court ruled that refugees could not be denied work permits. That same year, according to UNHCR, Costa Rica strengthened its refugee policy by agreeing to allow refugees who did not wish to repatriate to integrate socially, legally, and economically in Costa Rica.

But some Costa Rican nongovernmental organizations (NGOS) say that Costa Rica's reputation belies the actual situation for refugees there. The NGOS say that refugees in Costa Rica, particularly the undocumented, face considerable difficulties. Their lack of status and poor education result in exploitation, primarily by multinational agricultural concerns that use them for cheap labor. Most have little access to health or educational services, the NGOS say, and little or no legal protection.

In February 1991, a Costa Rican press report said that the Minister of the Interior planned to deport thousands of aliens, primarily Nicaraguans, living in Costa Rica without documentation. The director of one Costa Rican NGO said that many refugees lacked the funds needed to pay for the paperwork involved in applying for the resident status offered by the government.

Cuba

The number of Cubans arriving in the United States by boat and raft rose sharply, from 467 in 1990 to 2,203 in 1991. Perhaps even more significant, if less dramatic, was the number of Cubans who arrived in Miami on chartered flights, mostly with tourist visas, but who failed to return to Cuba.

Since 1959, more than a million Cubans have left their country. While the majority have sought asylum in the United States, a number also live in Europe and Latin America. In the first eight months of 1991, 1,070 were admitted through a U.S. government-sponsored resettlement program. An additional 1,815 Cuban refugees were admitted from third countries, primarily Panama, through the sponsorship of the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) between October 1990 and September 1991.

The recent increase in the flight of Cubans has coincided with increased human rights abuses and the deterioration of Cuba's economy following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Cuba's long-term patron. The economic crisis, in turn, has been aggravated by a growing brain-drain of prominent citizens. Not since the mid-1960s have so many Cuban doctors, artists, pilots, writers, engineers, and scientists taken advantage of their travel privileges to pursue asylum abroad.

Reports of human rights violations climbed significantly during the second half of 1991 as government tactics became increasingly heavy-handed. "Before, there were government-organized demonstrations outside activists' homes and quiet arrests," reported Americas Watch. "Now they're going into homes and relying more on physical force."

Cuba remains host to some 1,100 refugees. A number of Haitians who flee their country by boat stop over in Cuba en route to the United States. The Cuban government reportedly offers the Haitians assistance while they are in Cuba. Few stay, however. After repairing their boats, most continue on towards the United States despite the fact that they may be interdicted by the U.S. Coast Guard and returned to Haiti (see Haiti).

Ecuador

In recent years, large numbers of Colombians and Peruvians have entered Ecuador, many fleeing violence in their countries. Most have settled in remote border areas, which has contributed to the lack of attention that has been paid to them. Addressing the influx from Colombia, the Ecuador-based Latin American Human Rights Association estimated that "a significant percentage . . . left their country as a result of violence or direct persecution." It estimated that 10,000 Colombian peasants entered Ecuador in 1990 alone.

The largest concentrations of Colombians are in the provinces of Esmeraldas, Sucumbios, Pichincha, Quito, and Santo Domingo de los Colorados. In conjunction with the Ecuadoran government, in November 1990, UNHCR undertook the first of a series of fact-finding missions to assess the magnitude of the Colombian refugee problem in Ecuador. The first mission, to Sucumbios Province in late 1990, suggested that some 4,000 Colombians there may be of concern to UNHCR. However, UNHCR findings of subsequent missions remain confidential. The Norwegian Refugee Council says there may be as many as 50,000 Colombian refugees in the country, but given the lack of documentation, USCR cannot yet confirm this figure.

It is unclear whether UNHCR has addressed the situation of the Peruvians who have entered Ecuador.

A group of 22 Colombians living in Quito is under UNHCR protection and assistance, although none in this group has been officially recognized as a refugee by the Ecuadoran government.

The violence causing the flight of Peruvians and Colombians into Ecuador is characterized by the disintegration of the rule of law and the state's inability to protect its own citizens from—and indeed its role in exacerbating—generalized violence associated both with guerrilla movements and government counterinsurgency campaigns, and drug-related violence. In both countries, there have been human rights violations by guerrilla groups, drug cartels, government military and security forces, and paramilitary groups (see Peru, Colombia). These include summary executions, political killings, disappearances, torture, and other acts of terrorism.

Some 500 recognized refugees of various nationalities are assisted by UNHCR in Ecuador.

El Salvador

Less than an hour before midnight on New Year's Eve and the end of Javier Perez de Cuellar's term as United Nations Secretary General, President Alfredo Cristiani and leaders of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) tentatively agreed to put an end to El Salvador's civil war.

Twelve years of fighting had left some 75,000 dead, well over 1 million outside the country's borders, and as many as 400,000 internally displaced.

Just what impact peace will have on repatriation of Salvadoran refugees remains to be seen. But even before a formal peace was agreed to by the warring parties, thousands of Salvadorans had already returned. Significant numbers of repatriations began in October 1987. Most (nearly 20,000) occurred en masse from camps in neighboring Honduras. UNHCR reports a total of 2,500 repatriates for 1991 (most from Nicaragua), far fewer than the 8,000 reported for 1990. It is likely this reflects the "clearing out" of camps in Honduras, and the fact that most Salvadorans remaining in neighboring countries are not subject to UNHCR monitoring. In all, nearly 27,000 repatriates were reported by the end of 1991. Given that 1.5 million Salvadorans may still remain outside the country, it is likely that repatriation will again accelerate, assuming the peace holds.

Repatriations that occurred before the peace agreement was reached were a cause of concern to the government. Reportedly, the government viewed returnees as likely FMLN sympathizers, and restricted travel by them and other undocumented Salvadorans, including the internally displaced. It is reported that up to 80 percent of returnees are not yet in possession of documents acceptable to the authorities. Those without documents are subject to arrest.

In July, the United Nations Verification Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) began its task of verifying compliance by the government and FMLN of the Agreement on Human Rights signed in 1990. Although the human rights situation in El Salvador improved in 1991, both sides in the conflict were guilty of abuses, including the reported extrajudicial execution of one returnee by members of the Salvadoran armed forces.

El Salvador remains host to some 250 registered Central American refugees, 400 fewer than in 1990. Perhaps as many as 20,000 unregistered asylum seekers are also present.

French Guiana

In April 1991, Surinamese refugees in French Guiana—descendants of African slaves known as Maroons—had their already limited hopes for an early repatriation dashed when the leader of the Maroon insurgency in Suriname secretly negotiated a ceasefire with the Surinamese government that did not include any provision for the refugees' safe return home. Nevertheless, the French government seized the occasion to redouble its efforts to expel Maroons from French Guiana, calling into question future prospects for those in the camps. According to the *New York Times*, in April, the French authorities razed the makeshift shelters of Surinamese living outside official camps, and returned some of the refugees back to Suriname.

The Maroons fled to French Guiana, an overseas *department* of France, in 1986, following the outbreak of civil war in Suriname between Maroons and the military. The refugees' status in French Guiana is precarious. The French authorities there do not officially recognize them as refugees, and have made it difficult for UNHCR to assist them. Some 6,200 of the 9,600 refugees live in camps administered by the French government. UNHCR continues to press the authorities to grant them refugee status.

Guatemala

The decades-long civil conflict in Guatemala, Central America's oldest and most violent, drags on. It is estimated that more than 100,000 have died as a result of the conflict and that an additional 40,000 have disappeared. Hundreds of thousands of Guatemalans have fled to neighboring countries, or remain internally displaced. Mexico hosts an official Guatemalan refugee population of some 43,500.

The human rights situation in Guatemala has deteriorated steadily since 1989, despite the maintenance of civilian government, introduced in December 1986. Political killings, disappearances, and torture at the hands of the security forces and related groups have increased to the point that some observers compare the current situation with the high levels of repression experienced under military rule.

The Guatemalan government's Human Rights Ombudsman listed 158 complaints of political killings in 1991. The Ombudsman, the Attorney General, and human rights groups have also found unambiguous eyewitness and physical evidence of killings by Civil Self-Defense

Patrols (PACS). Several clandestine cemeteries have been found containing bodies of persons who were summarily executed, some showing signs of torture. Organizations working in human rights-related fields continued to be singled out as targets of official abuse. Because of insufficient progress on human rights in Guatemala, the United States has not resumed its military aid program, suspended in December 1990.

The current population of Guatemalan refugees and internally displaced owes its origin to the fierce counterinsurgency campaign carried out by the military in the early 1980s. Since then, progress toward reintegrating the uprooted population has been slow and problematic. The tripartite repatriation program, initiated in 1987, was far less effective than expected. By the end of 1989, no more than 900 people had repatriated and, by 1990, the repatriations had decreased substantially, if not ceased altogether. The 1991 repatriation effort was larger: some 1,800 Guatemalans repatriated during the year.

Political violence remains a major deterrent to large-scale repatriation. Many refugees have been detained and harassed by army authorities upon return, and there have been reports of some killings.

There are other obstacles to repatriation. By leaving the camps, refugees run the risk of losing material assistance and offical protection by the Mexican government and UNHCR. Upon returning to Guatemala, they lose their official refugee status.

Aside from reuniting with family members, the main impetus for repatriated refugees is control of their communal and private lands. However, once repatriated, the refugees frequently discover that their land has been occupied by internally displaced campesinos, army officers, or large landholders.

The government of President Vinicio Cerezo has repeatedly equated the returnees with guerrillas or subversives. Returnees are considered a national security matter and so politically sensitive that it has been extremely difficult for nongovernmental organizations to assist them openly. Neither the repatriated refugees nor the internally displaced receive adequate help from the civilian government. The army routinely seeks to bring both groups under its control either by offering incentives to move them into so-called model villages, or by capturing them and moving them by force. The army remains very much in control of the repatriation process, which undermines the power of the refugees to exercise their rights as distinctive cultures and communities.

Despite Guatemala's lengthy record of gross human rights violations, a small number of refugees from other Central American countries have fled to Guatemala during the last decade. At the end of 1991, the official refugee population in Guatemala numbered 8,300, of whom 3,400 were Salvadoran and 4,900 Nicaraguan. An estimated 250,000 undocumented Central Americans— also mainly Salvadorans and Nicaraguans—live in Guatemala. Among these are persons summarily deported from Mexico (see Mexico).

Haiti

The watershed date for Haitian migration in 1991 was September 30, the date popularly elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown in a military coup. For about a month, a reign of repression swept the island, as the President's supporters were rounded up amid great brutality. At the same time, however, a steady stream of rumors spoke of the imminent return of Aristide. But Aristide did not return. About 200,000 Aristide supporters fled their homes and went into hiding after the coup.

Boat departures, a means of escape during previous dictatorships, which had ebbed during the Aristide tenure, started again on October 28, when a boatload of 19 persons was interdicted by the U.S. Coast Guard. By November 25, the number of interdicted Haitians had grown to 4,530. Because of deteriorating conditions in Haiti, the U.S. government initially held off forcibly returning them. But as the numbers of asylum seekers increased, and as the decks of the cutters became crowded with interdicted boat people, the U.S. government decided to return people forcibly to Haiti who had been screened out during asylum prescreening interviews held aboard the cutters. On November 18 and 19, the Coast Guard returned two boatloads totaling 538 people to Port-au-Prince.

Further forced returns were suspended, however, when a federal judge issued a restraining order on the government's action. For the rest of the year, the matter was tied up in the U.S. courts.

In the meantime, interdicted Haitians were brought to the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, where INS asylum officers began screening them for "colorable claims" to asylum. By the end of 1991, 391 of the Haitians had been brought to the United States to pursue asylum claims, representing about 15 percent of those given screening interviews. Out of a total of 8,377 Haitians interdicted, 6,780 remained at Guantánamo. Nearly 500 voluntarily repatriated, and others had been moved to Venezuela and Honduras.

USCR contacted the U.S. Attorney General on October 31, prior to the November 5 imposition of economic sanctions on Haiti, to urge him to halt the interdiction operation and to designate Haitian nationals for temporary protected status (TPS), which stays deportation for a set period of time due to armed conflict, natural disasters, or other extraordinary, temporary conditions in the home country.

On November 19, after the forced repatriations occurred, USCR wrote to President Bush asking him to reconsider the decision. Citing UNHCR's executive committee's conclusion 23, adopted in 1980, that "asylum seekers rescued at sea should always be admitted, at least on a temporary basis," USCR said that U.S. conduct "falls short of international human rights standards . . . [and] should be rectified immediately."

Treatment of Haitians attempting to flee into the Dominican Republic was also of great concern. The only land escape for Haitians, the Dominican Republic, was not receptive to asylum seekers. An estimated half million Haitians reside in the Dominican Republic. Many undocumented Haitians have reportedly survived in near-slavery conditions on sugar plantations where they have been forced to "choose" between forced labor under armed guards in the cane fields or forced repatriation.

Between mid-June and early August, the Dominican Republic had forcibly returned about 10,000 Haitians to Haiti, in apparent retaliation for President Aristide's critical remarks about the treatment of Haitians on the sugar plantations.

In November, USCR wrote to the President of the Dominican Republic to express concern about reports that 24 Haitians attempting to flee to Haiti in the aftermath of the coup were in danger of forced return. "We respectfully ask you to treat Haitian asylum seekers according to international human rights and refugee rights principles," said the letter. "We also urge you to keep your border open to allow persons fleeing violence and persecution to find temporary refuge in your country. We have made the same request of our own government."

Among the first group of 538 Haitians forcibly repatriated in November 1991, this Haitian is escorted by Haitian Red Cross personnel from the U.S. Coast Guard cutter "Dallas". Although further forced repatriations in 1991 were barred by court action, the Supreme Court lifted the ban in early 1992, and thousands of Haitians were forcibly returned from the U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. AP

Honduras

At the end of December 1989, there were 34,500 registered Salvadoran and Nicaraguan refugees in Honduras. By the end of 1991, only 1,800 remained (1,700 Salvadoran and 100 Nicaraguan). Another 50,000 undocumented Central Americans, mostly Nicaraguans, also remain in Honduras.

Salvadoran refugees fleeing civil strife in El Salvador began to enter Honduras in 1980. Because they came from areas dominated by leftist guerrillas, they were immediately considered suspect by the Honduran military, which over the years was accused of abuses—including killings—against the refugees. The Salvadoran refugee camps were sealed, and the refugees' movement restricted.

The refugees became highly organized (and politicized). Refugee leaders were often viewed, including by UNHCR and some relief workers, as difficult and authoritarian in their interaction with other refugees.

Beginning in October 1989, the Salvadoran refugees began to repatriate. Although conditions in El Salvador were still such that the refugees' security upon return could not be guaranteed, the refugees themselves opted for repatriation over continued exile in what they viewed as a hostile environment.

Of the 1,700 Salvadoran refugees who remained in Honduras at the end of December 1991, some 1,200 were expected to repatriate in early 1992.

Nicaraguan Miskito and Sumo Indian refugees began entering Honduras in 1981, fleeing the Sandinista government's attempts to relocate them away from their traditional Coco River villages. Many returned between 1987 and 1989 when the Sandinista government agreed to measures giving greater autonomy to the Indian populations. Nicaraguan refugees of Spanish descent, or Ladinos, entered Honduras beginning in 1987, fleeing increased political turmoil, economic hardship, and the conflict between the government and the contra (Nicaraguan Resistance) forces.

Following the Sandinista government's defeat in the February 1990 Nicaraguan elections, registered Nicaraguan refugees began returning from Honduras in large numbers. Most of the Nicaraguan contras and their dependents whom Honduras—sometimes reluctantly—hosted also returned home by late 1990 under the auspices of the International Verification and Support Commission (CIAV), a joint venture of the United Nations and the Organization of American States, which oversaw the return and disarmament of the contras.

In late 1991, the United States asked Honduras to take in some of the many Haitians who were fleeing their country following a coup d'etat there. Honduras accepted 250 Haitians. Thay had all repatriated by the end of December.

The human rights situation in Honduras did not improve in 1991. Political killings and torture by the police and security forces continued. An estimated 7,000 Hondurans are internally displaced.

Nicaragua

The decade-long Nicaraguan civil war came to an end in 1990 with the United Nicaraguan Opposition's (UNO) electoral defeat of the Sandinista government and the subsequent demobilization of the contra (Nicaraguan Resistance) rebel group. The human cost of the war included 28,500 dead, 25,000 wounded, 10,000 disabled, 16,500 orphaned, and 354,000 internally displaced. Some 90,000 of these displaced still live in agricultural settlements set up by the government during the war. Perhaps half a million Nicaraguan refugees fled the country, mainly to the United States, Honduras, and Costa Rica. Including demobilized soldiers, some 20 percent of the entire population has been directly affected by the war.

Many—but not most—Nicaraguan refugees abroad have returned home. Some 35,500 refugees officially repatriated in 1990. Another 15,000 returned home in 1991.

Miskito and Sumo Indians who fled to Honduras from the Atlantic coastal region of Nicaragua began to return even before the 1990 elections. When several Miskito leaders, who had previously advocated armed resistance to Sandinista suppression of traditional Miskito and Sumu cultures, opted for discussions with the government, refugees who had hesitated to repatriate began to consider the option. Sandinista government concessions to the indigenous peoples affected voluntary repatriations. So too did assistance provided by Cuba to 50,000 people in what became, under government reforms, the "Autonomous Region of the North Atlantic." In all, more than 25,000 Miskito and Sumu returned to Nicaragua by the end of 1990.

However, new problems arose in 1991 for the people of the Autonomous Region when aid to the area, which came largely from Cuba, was cut off by the Cuban government. Although private agencies continued to provide assistance, the overall level was not sufficient to allow the Miskito and Sumu to return to even pre-war living conditions.

The Nicaraguan government says that it has "created the necessary conditions to facilitate the repatriation of Nicaraguans abroad, and has offered them better conditions for their assimilation into the economic and social life of the country." But many refugees remain reluctant to repatriate. Their initial hopes have been dashed by a deepening economic crisis and concerns about security.

President Violeta Chamorro's decision to retain former Sandinista President Daniel Ortega's brother, Humberto Ortega, as head of the armed forces caused many refugees concern. The Sandinistas' control of the country's armed forces, security apparatus, police, and unions means that they retain a large role in the every day life of the country, despite their rejection at the polls.

The issue of land has been one of the key sources of frustration for former contras and repatriated refugees alike. Many contras disarmed in exchange for promises of land, but thousands have yet to receive any. Returning refugees aiming to recover lost land or businesses also encounter problems. According to the head of the Nicaraguan Commission on Human Rights, "There is a complete lack of authority to enforce return of property. The police do absolutely nothing."

Partly in response to these difficulties, small bands of former Nicaraguan contras have reorganized. Some 2,000 of these so-called "recontras" have reportedly taken up arms and set up bases in the mountains of eastern and northern Nicaragua. In an attack on a cooperative in northern Nicaragua, recontras killed three children between the ages of 9 and 16.

The Sandinistas' control of the military and the forming of recontra groups have raised concern over the possibility of renewed warfare.

In addition to its returnees, internally displaced population, and demobilized contras and dependents, Nicaragua hosts some 2,800 registered refugees, mainly Salvadorans, who receive UNHCR assistance, and an estimated 16,000 undocumented Central American refugees. The vast majority of these are also Salvadorans, who began entering Nicaragua in the early 1980s fleeing political violence in their country.

Peru

Peru leads South America in the size of its population of internally displaced civilians. More than 200,000 have had to flee their homes because of political violence, the majority women and children. Since 1980, when the Communist Party of Peru/Shining Path declared war on the state, more than 24,000 Peruvians have fallen victim to political violence. A UNICEF report estimates that 20,000 children have been abandoned.

Bowing to pressure by the U.S. Congress to improve a dismal human rights record, Peru's authorities did institute important reforms. After August 13, the day Congress suspended $94 million in anti-drug aid, human rights monitors noted a decrease in "disappearances" carried out by the army and police. State prosecutors were given strengthened powers to enter all detention centers, including military barracks. A military court charged army officers with manslaughter for a massacre in Huancavelica. For the first time, the military Joint Chiefs of Staff met with the National Coordinating Committee for Human Rights.

Many villages in the Emergency Zone, approximately 50 percent of the country, formed civil defense patrols to defend against the Shining Path. In the early 1980s, patrols operated under the direct control of the military, and were forced to fight well-armed guerrillas with sticks, stones, and home-made weapons. The patrols continue to be accused of serious human rights abuses.

However, many of the estimated 1,500 patrols in central and southern Peru are taking an independent road. While they cooperate with the army and have received arms and some training, they are no longer used as "shock troops." In some areas, like the Tulumayo Valley in Junin and the Apurimac Valley in Ayacucho, patrols expelled guerrillas, winning a margin of peace and convincing some *desplazados* (internally displaced) to return.

As yet, however, these changes have not led to a significant decrease in internal displacement. To the contrary, families continue to flee security force, civil patrol, and guerrilla violence, but find it ever more difficult to survive in urban centers like Lima, the capital. Economic austerity measures implemented in August 1990 raised prices and lowered incomes, meaning that most *desplazados* depend on soup kitchens to eat and are increasingly prone to diseases like tuberculosis and cholera.

One lay pastoral worker noted that five years ago it was possible to provide a displaced family with the basics—shelter, blankets, medical aid, and some food—for $200 a year. Now, $500 isn't enough. Before, families would bring blankets, some animals, plates, or spoons, she says, but now they come with nothing.

The Shining Path is active in Lima, especially in the shantytowns with large numbers of *desplazados*. Several shantytown leaders and soup kitchen presidents were murdered by guerrillas in

Refugees in Mexico: New Law, Old Practices

Bill Frelick

Reforms in Mexican refugee law in 1990 were slow to be realized in practice in 1991. In July 1990, for the first time, Mexico introduced the term "refugee" into its law. Prior to that, refugees per se were not recognized. A very few persons who had applied for asylum from outside the country had been granted status as political asylees, but refugees and would-be asylum seekers within Mexico—including hundreds of thousands of Central Americans—had to seek other grounds for legal status if they decided to come forward at all.

However, a year and a half after the law was passed, regulations implementing it had not been published, and treatment of refugees and asylum seekers remained ad hoc, with allegations of abuses continuing and Central Americans still being summarily deported across the border with Guatemala.

In January 1991, USCR published *Running the Gauntlet: The Central American Journey through Mexico,* which summarized the legal reforms dealing with refugees but at the same time found widespread abuses at the local level in the treatment of Central Americans attempting to transit the country.

In a letter transmitting the report to the Mexican government, USCR welcomed the inclusion of the definition of the term "refugee" in the new law, and called upon Mexico to ratify the UN Refugee Convention and Protocol and to include in its refugee definition persons fleeing persecution in their home country (the definition in the new law recognizes as refugees *only* those fleeing generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, and massive human rights violations, specifically excluding persons meeting the "well-founded fear of persecution" standard of international law).

USCR said that despite the legal reforms, abuses of Central Americans continue to occur. *Running the Gauntlet* included testimonials of rape, extortion, and beatings at the hands of the federal judicial police and other authorities. USCR recommended that the Mexican government set strict limitations on the power of police authorities outside the Directorate of Migration Services to apprehend, detain, and deport aliens. USCR also called for the prosecution of any law enforcement officials who abuse their authority by extorting or otherwise mistreating aliens. USCR recommended that the courts be opened to undocumented aliens seeking redress for violations of their human rights in Mexico. Finally, USCR made several recommendations about how the new process for adjudication of refugee claims might be organized. The central recommendation was that the Directorate of Migration Services, which has responsibility for enforcing Mexico's immigration laws, not be given the responsibility for adjudicating refugee claims. USCR suggested that COMAR, the Mexican Commission for Assistance to Refugees, a government agency that has worked with Guatemalan refugees in the camps located in the south, might better carry out the adjudication function since it is unencumbered with an enforcement mandate.

The government did not respond formally to the USCR report.

USCR issued an update to its report in July 1991, which highlighted several reforms that had occurred or were being contemplated by the Mexican authorities. First, USCR learned, the Directorate of Migration Services proposed that COMAR be posted at strategic migratory checkpoints to assist in identifying potential refugees among detained undocumented persons. Second, the Directorate proposed that only their officials be empowered to detain undocumented aliens, to prevent human rights violations of these people by other police and security forces. Third, the Directorate said that undocumented aliens apprehended in the central and northern portions of the country were being transferred to a holding center to which UNHCR would have access. Fourth, a circular had been sent to all checkpoints in the southern region instructing Migration Services officers to refer all potential refugee cases to the central authorities in Mexico City.

Both *Running the Gauntlet* and the July report included allegations that the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) was involved in training and intelligence gathering with the Mexican Directorate of Migration Services, including direct funding from the INS budget for deportation of third country nationals out of Mexico. In March, USCR sent a letter signed by 65 U.S. nongovernmental organizations to the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs drawing her attention to the interdiction of Central Americans in Mexico and expressing disappointment in the $6 million cut in refugee assistance funds for Central America in the Bush Administration's FY 92 budget request. The U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs did not respond to the letter.

While the focus of USCR's activities in 1991 was primarily on Central Americans attempting to journey through Mexico, large refugee populations have been living for years both in the south, as well as congregated around Mexico City.

1991 for opposing their policies. Threats against humanitarian agencies working in Peru impede their work. In 1991, after the murders of two staff people in Lima, World Vision suspended its operations.

Perhaps the most dramatic emergency involving displaced people in 1991 took place along the Ene and Tambo rivers in Junin Province. There, the Shining Path hoped to win colonist families and members of the Ashaninka ethnic group, Peru's largest Amazon group. However, testimonies reveal that children were force-recruited and villages burned. People who spoke against the guerrillas were often murdered. Families went hungry so that the rebels could eat.

To combat guerrillas, some Ashaninkas formed civil defense groups allied with the army. They call the organization the Ashaninka Army, and claim it is independent. However, human rights groups charge that the Ashaninka Army often acts under the order of or in conjunction with the Peruvian army, and has been implicated in human rights abuses and forcing colonist families from historically Ashaninka lands.

When Peru's army established new outposts along the Ene River in May, hundreds of Ashaninkas escaped guerrilla-controlled communities to seek protection. By July, there were 1,850 displaced Ashaninkas at army-controlled camps. Families also fled north, to Ashaninka-held communities on the upper Tambo. For instance, the mission settlement of Poyeni grew from 800 to more than 4,000 in just two years, the majority displaced families. An estimated 6,000 colonist *desplazados* gathered in makeshift camps along the lower Apurimac River.

Diseases like malaria, cholera, and leishmaniasis are common. Children especially suffer from malnutrition and disease once thought eradicated, like whooping-cough and polio. Despite the need, however, little has been done to aid displaced Ashaninkas, mirroring the government's attitude toward the displaced population as a whole. Initially, even International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) access was inhibited because army officers delayed rehabilitating the air strips that would have made immediate shipments possible. This is partly due to a lingering distrust of the ICRC, which some army officers believe directly aids guerrillas.

Although most Peruvians seeking to escape the violence in their home areas have become internally displaced, thousands have also fled to neighboring Ecuador and Bolivia. Little is known about their current conditions. UNHCR is aware of the presence of Peruvians in the border regions, but so far has not carried out an assessment regarding their potential status as refugees or their need for assistance.

Peru hosts 600 refugees from other countries: about 400 Cubans and 200 elderly Europeans and Latin Americans. They receive assistance from UNHCR through the Peruvian Catholic Migration Commission.

Some 340,000 Central Americans in refugee-like circumstances, mostly Salvadorans, have been living in Mexico City and other urban centers. This is the population that has remained essentially underground for years, and the new law raised hopes that they might finally be recognized and protected. However, the government has remained vague and noncommittal about how the new refugee definition might relate to them. In all, only 4,033 Salvadorans were being assisted by UNHCR at mid-year.

The year marked the tenth anniversary of exile for many of the 43,528 Guatemalan refugees living in camps in the southern states of Chiapas, Campeche, and Quintana Roo. When these refugees first arrived in the early 1980s, Mexico initially deported many of the new arrivals en masse, causing an outcry both within Mexico and internationally. The situation was exacerbated by repeated cross border Guatemalan military incursions, in which refugees were killed, and in which Mexico appeared unable or unwilling to protect refugees in Mexican territory. In June 1991, Guatemalan armed forces crossed into Mexican territory again, into the state of Tabasco.

In 1984, Mexico relocated about half the refugees to the states of Campeche and Quintana Roo, hundreds of miles from the border. Although the move itself was criticized, it effectively created a *de facto* recognition by Mexico of its responsibility to protect these refugees, now numbered at 18,808.

The Guatemalan refugees in the camps of Campeche and Quintana Roo were never individually determined to be refugees, but were given renewable residence permits and work authorization. The refugees who refused to move out of Chiapas—now estimated at 24,720—were recognized, too, in a sense, as long as they remained in camps. However, their residence permits had to be renewed more frequently, and they were denied work permits. Assistance for them was kept to a minimum, and they remained on the margins of social and economic life in Chiapas. However, in 1991, several reforms were instituted, including liberalizing residence and work permit requirements, and registration of refugee births for Mexican citizenship.

Unlike Campeche and Quintana Roo, where land is plentiful, in Chiapas the refugees have found themselves in the midst of tight competition for limited land availability, drawing them into conflict with some local landowners and Mexicans living on communal lands. During 1991, government officials advanced plans to consolidate some of the Chiapas refugees, who have been located in 127 camps, into new camps, called "secure settlements," in an attempt to defuse some of the tensions with the local population.

The creation of new camps, combined with reforms in residence and work permits, as well as the new refugee definition in Mexican law, which appeared to apply most readily to the Guatemalan refugees in the south, suggested increased permanence and security for this refugee population. Other developments, however, indicated that pressure was building for them to repatriate. UNHCR was operating on a plan to phase out assistance to the Guatemalan refugees in Campeche and Quintana Roo entirely by the end of 1992. They are expected either to become economically self-sufficient or voluntarily repatriate. UNHCR encouraged both developments, both through income-generating activities and promoting voluntary repatriation. In September, meetings were held in Guatemala City among representatives of the UNHCR, COMAR, and Guatemala's Commission for Special Attention to Repatriates to "define policies of honorable return" for Guatemalan refugees in Mexico. The refugees appeared to remain wary, however, that conditions in Guatemala permitted safe return. Earlier in the year, the Permanent Commissions of the Delegates of the Refugees in Mexico, the elected representatives of the refugees themselves, issued six minimum conditions for voluntary return, including guarantees that their lands would be handed back to them and that they would have the right to organize upon return. During 1991, 1,765 refugees voluntarily repatriated to Guatemala. From 2,090 returning in 1988, the number fell to 971 in 1989, and 840 in 1990.

The number of expulsions across the Guatemala border in 1991 was more difficult to gauge. Mexican government sources initially indicated that the number was between 35,000 and 40,000. Nongovernmental estimates ranged as high as 150,000. These represented persons who overwhelmingly were not able to register asylum claims. Although expulsions of Guatemalans in this manner would constitute repatriation—and possible *refoulement*—this would not be the case for Salvadorans and other nationalities expelled into Guatemala.

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MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

The superpowers continued their withdrawal from Afghanistan during 1991 culminating in both the USSR—now CIS—and United States mutually agreeing to sever their arms transfers to Afghanistan as of January 1, 1992. The proxy war of the superpowers thus became in 1991 more of a civil war, with regional powers—in this case, Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia—competing for influence among the warring parties.

Although no longer a Cold War battlefield, the civil war, which has cost an estimated 1.5 million dead, 2 million injured, more than 6 million refugees, and 2 million internally displaced out of a total pre-war population of 15 million, continued in 1991. The combatants easily traded ideology for ethnic differences as reasons for killing each other, as the split between the dominant Pushtuns and the Tajiks—who claim to outnumber them—became more pronounced.

Fighting during the year centered around control of cities and towns controlled by the Kabul regime of Najibullah, formerly the head of the communist "People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan," but now a self-proclaimed nationalist leading a renamed "Watan" (homeland) Party. Militias armed and funded by the Kabul regime were often in the thick of fighting. Battles also were waged among previously allied *mujahedin* factions.

In April, the government garrison at Khost fell to *mujahedin* guerrillas after a bitter battle. At least 1,000 families reportedly took refuge in Miram Shah, Pakistan. Other unconfirmed reports alleged that the *mujahedin* were holding some Khost residents in camps. Before Khost had actually changed hands, shelling had reduced much of the city to rubble, rendering many of its 15,000 inhabitants homeless.

In May and June, heavy fighting in Herat Province forced 30,000 to 40,000 civilians to flee toward the Iranian border. Most were believed to have stayed in Afghanistan, but with shortages of food and water.

An important step toward peace occurred on May 21, when UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar presented the terms of a settlement agreed upon by the United States, the Soviet Union, Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. The plan called for an end to military assistance from outside Afghanistan to all of the Afghan parties to the conflict to enable "a strictly Afghan political process, free from foreign interference" enabling the Afghan people "to determine their own form of government." The Secretary General's plan also called for, "The recognition of the need for adequate financial and material resources to alleviate the hardship of the Afghan refugees and the creation of necessary conditions for their voluntary repatriation, as well as for the economic and social reconstruction of Afghanistan."

Despite the call for an end to hostilities during a transition period leading to a settlement, fighting continued. In August, Ahmed Shah Massoud, the military commander controlling most of northeastern Afghanistan, threatened to cut the Salang highway linking Kabul to the CIS, unless the government halted air strikes that he alleged were causing hundreds of casualties in civilian areas of the northeast.

As if humans had not caused enough misery in Afghanistan, bad weather, causing floods in the spring and consequent crop failures in the fall, forced tens of thousands of people in the central mountain region of Hazarajat to abandon their homes in October. A few Pushtun *mujahedin* commanders controlling access to the area kept food aid from reaching the Hazaras. Various interpretations were given to the motivation for these actions, such as to deny aid to Hazaras because they belong to the Shi'ite minority; to pressure humanitarian agencies to assist other populations along the aid routes; to strengthen their own hand in local power struggles; and sheer banditry.

The flow of aid to displaced persons and other vulnerable civilians in Afghanistan was reduced during the year, in part, because of the decline in international interest in Afghan affairs. On July 30, the UN Secretary General's envoy to Afghanistan, Benon Sevan, announced a $31 million cut in the $136 million UN-coordinated aid program. Even after the cut, there was a $26 million gap between pledges and actual donations.

On several occasions during the year, western aid workers were abducted in Afghanistan. After two of its Afghan employees were killed in July, the ICRC announced suspension of its activities in the eastern region of Herat and the northern area of Mazar-i-sharif.

Throughout 1991, small numbers of Rohingy
ber escalated in November, and by the end

U.S. AID assistance was suspended in response to these incidents with the result that seed and fertilizer were not available at an optimum time of need.

Bangladesh

In 1978, a Burmese military campaign code-named *Naga Min,* or Operation-

Dragon King, forced nearly 250,000 Muslims from Arakan State across Burma's westernmost border into Bangladesh. The arriving refugees told horror stories of murder, rape, and torture at the hands of the Burmese army. About two-thirds returned to Burma in 1979 under a bilateral repatriation agreement, while others settled locally or moved on to other Muslim countries, particularly Saudi Arabia.

Twelve years later, the army launched a similar campaign against the Arakanese Muslims, also known as Rohingyas. By August 1991, the new wave of Burmese refugees in Bangladesh numbered 16,000. By the end of 1991, the number had risen to an estimated 30,000 and climbing, as every week, hundreds more refugees were crossing the muddy Naf River into Bangladesh. They, too, recounted incidents of mass arrests, forced porterage, torture, rapes, and killings.

(USCR visited Bangladesh in early March 1992 to document the refugees' situation. By mid-March, the number of Rohingya refugees had grown to more than 145,000.)

(Muslim Burmese) refugees fled to Bangladesh, often crossing the Naf River by boat. Their num-
1991, there were more than 30,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. USCR/H. Ruiz

In 1973, the Shanti Bahini, a tribal insurgency in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, launched an armed movement for autonomy. A government-sponsored resettlement program had lured more than 300,000 Bangladeshi settlers into the highland areas with offers of land, cash subsidies, and military protection, making the Chakmas and other tribal groups a minority in their traditional homelands. The rebels wanted the settlers out but instead, in the course of the conflict, were themselves driven into India's Tripura state by Bangladeshi security forces. Estimates at the end of 1991 put the number of CHT refugees in India at 65,000.

In late October, the Bangladesh government offered an amnesty to the guerrillas, promising five acres of land and food aid for one year to any member of the Shanti Bahini who would surrender to the military authorities. About 2,000 rebels surrendered under a previous amnesty from 1985 to 1989, but tribal leaders charged that the government reneged on its promises.

An estimated 260,000 Urdu-speaking Biharis, or "stranded Pakistanis", continued to live in 66 squalid urban encampments in Dhaka. Having migrated from India's Bihar state in 1947, more than 380,000 Biharis sided with Pakistan when Bangladesh seceded in 1971 after a bloody, nine-month war. Nearly 120,000 resettled in Pakistan under a 1973 peace agreement, but the rest remained stranded in Bangladesh.

Following meetings between Bangladesh prime minister Khaleda Zia and her Pakistani counterpart, Nawaz Sharif, in October, Bangladeshi officials announced that repatriation could begin some time in 1992. But previous commitments have collapsed as Pakistan, worried about the costs and the ethnic impacts, backed out.

UNHCR provided care and maintenance to about 150 refugees in Dhaka during 1991, primarily Somalis and Iranians.

India

Although India hosts more than 400,000 refugees from at least eight different countries, it has resisted virtually every offer of international assistance. India is not signatory to the *1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* and permits UNHCR to maintain only a nominal presence in New Delhi with no mandate to assist or protect refugees on the country's vast borderlines.

Sri Lankan Refugees The largest group of refugees are the 210,000 Sri Lankan Tamils living in the southern state of Tamil Nadu. Although Sri Lankan refugees first began fleeing to India in 1983, following bloody anti-Tamil riots in Sri Lanka, most have arrived since June 1990. Following months of fragile calm, in mid-1990, fighting flared anew between the Sri Lankan army and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who seek to establish one-party rule in an independent state of Tamil Eelam. Within three months, nearly 100,000 Tamils had crossed the narrow Palk Strait into India.

In October 1990, Indian and Sri Lankan naval patrols stepped up their surveillance in the Palk Strait, and refugee arrivals dropped to 2,000 for the month and dwindled to practically nothing by the end of the year. In all of 1991, fewer than 250 Sri Lankan refugees arrived in India.

When USCR visited Tamil Nadu in May 1991, there were 210,000 refugees in the state, of whom 115,000 were living in a total of 237 camps, with the rest taking up residence somewhere outside.

In an October 1991 report, *Sri Lanka: Island of Refugees*, USCR noted that despite curbs on international assistance and monitoring, and despite instances of pushbacks and coercive measures to promote repatriation, "India has accorded a welcome to Tamil asylum seekers that is as generous as for any refugee group in Asia." The camps, with few exceptions, were neither fenced nor guarded. Refugee families received a small monthly allowance from the government, and rice and kerosene were available at subsidized prices. Medical care was free, as was education for children up to the 8th grade.

The Indian posture grew far more unfriendly after May 21, when former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was blown apart by a suicide bomber in Tamil Nadu, while he was campaigning for re-election. It is widely suspected that the Tigers, or their sympathizers, had a hand in the assassination.

Shortly after Gandhi's death, senior officials within or allied with his Congress-I Party began to call for the deportation of all Sri Lankan refugees in Tamil Nadu. Access to higher education was cut off for all refugee students and Sri Lankan refugee camps and neighborhoods were subjected to frequent police searches.

In late July, Indian officials rounded up more than 2,000 unregistered Sri Lankan Tamils living outside the camps. Shortly thereafter, the Indian and Sri Lankan governments announced they were collaborating on a plan to "encourage the early and voluntary return of refugees presently in India to their original places of habitation."

On August 22, USCR wrote to the Indian government, expressing concern at the arrests and the proposed repatriation, and urging the government to permit UNHCR to assist and protect the Sri Lankan refugees living in Tamil Nadu.

In its October report, USCR said that "Any further discussions between the Indian and Sri Lankan governments regarding the voluntary repatriation of the refugees in Tamil Nadu should involve the UNHCR representatives for the respective countries.... The prospect of organized return raises a veritable sea of red flags, given the lack of a full-time UNHCR presence in Tamil Nadu and the unlikelihood of safe reintegration in Sri Lanka. Certainly what is not needed is to replace the refugee camps in India with more camps in Sri Lanka."

(On January 22, 1992, the S.S. Akbar docked in Sri Lanka's Trincomalee harbor, carrying 614 Tamil refugees returning from India. These were the first of an estimated 30,000 Tamils who may be repatriated under a new Indo-Sri Lankan agreement reached at the turn of the year. USCR wrote to both governments expressing concerns that the repatriation lacked sufficient international safeguards to be deemed either voluntary or safe.)

Tibetan Refugees More than 100,000 Tibetan refugees continued to make their home in Dharamsala, India. Most followed their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, into exile when Chinese forces violently annexed Tibet in 1959. About 7,000 Tibetans have fled their country since 1986. Shortly before a visit by Chinese prime minister Li Peng in December, Indian police arrested more than 300 Tibetans and Indian sympathizers and sealed off the Tibetan refugee camps.

Legislation passed by the U.S. Congress in November 1990 provided 1,000 special immigrant visas to be available for a three-year period to admit Tibetans who have been "displaced" in India or Nepal. The first group was expected to arrive in the United States in early 1992. The Tibetans will be resettled in 10 cluster sites around the country without using federal funds.

CHT Refugees An estimated 65,000 refugees from Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) were living in camps in India's Tripura state. The CHT refugees are primarily Buddhist Chakmas and other ethnic hilltribe groups who have fled the fighting between a tribal insurgency and Bangladeshi security forces. In the wake of an amnesty offer made to the insurgents by the Bangladesh government in late October, some refugees began to return to the CHT in late 1991, telling stories of rape, abuse, and starvation in the Indian camps.

Other Refugees About 15,000 refugees from Bhutan fled into India in the early part of 1991. Most are ethnic Nepalese whose families had been living in southern Bhutan for centuries. Since 1988, an aggressive "ethnic integration" program ordered by 35-year-old King Wangchuk, a Buddhist Drukpa from the north, has alienated the Nepali-speaking Hindus.

When a predominantly Nepalese political group, the Bhutan People's Party (BPP), organized demonstrations in September 1990 seeking multi-party democracy and an end to absolute monarchy in Bhutan, security forces opened fire on the nonviolent protesters. An estimated 400 people died and 1,000 more were injured.

In January 1991, King Wangchuk ordered the expulsion of all "non-nationals." By March, volunteer militias, armed and trained by the government, set upon ethnic Nepalese neighborhoods. Refugees crossing into India and Nepal spoke of beatings, rapes, torture, and imprisonment. UNHCR has not been permitted access to this population.

About 1,400 Nagas, an ethnic minority group from Burma living across the border from the Indian states of Mizoram and Manipur, fled into India in December, reporting a crackdown by the Burmese military.

(In late January, 1992, Indian officials urged their Burmese counterparts to take back 950 Burmese nationals who had crossed into Nagaland.)

At the end of 1991, UNHCR was assisting 10,600 refugees in the New Delhi area, including 9,800 Afghans and 400 Iranians. There were also smaller numbers of Somalis, Burmese, and other nationalities. The refugees receive a monthly allowance of 800 rupees (about $27), as well as health, nutrition, and educational services. The total UNHCR budget for care and maintenance programs in India in 1991 was $4.5 million.

Iran

Although world attention in the spring of 1991 was drawn to the drama of Iraqi Kurds stranded on the Iraq-Turkey border, in fact more than double the number of Iraqis fled to Iran.

Unlike other countries bordering Iraq, Iran kept its borders open to fleeing refugees. In press releases and Congressional testimony, as well as a report based on a site visit to Iran in April, *Mass Exodus: Iraqi Refugees in Iran*, USCR praised Iran for its open borders and for mobilizing emergency support for the refugees, and criticized the international community for not providing adequate support for the Iranian relief effort.

At the peak of the mass influx, 1.4 million Iraqi refugees were in Iran. Large camps were constructed overnight, and the Iranian Red Crescent labored to prevent the outbreak of epidemics and to see that everyone was adequately fed and sheltered.

More than 100,000 Tibetan refugees live in Dharamsala, India (another 14,000 live in Nepal). In 1991, more than 2,000 Tibetans fled to Nepal and subsequently made their way to India.
USCR/H. Ruiz

Within a short time in June and July, however, most of the refugees had returned to Iraq. West Azerbaijan Province, which had the largest number of refugees, 550,000, at the peak of the crisis, was hosting only 38,800 by the year's end. Remarkably, only 8,380 of that number were 1991 arrivals. Nearly four of every five refugees remaining had arrived in 1988 following the chemical weapons attack on Halabjah. The nine camps in West Azerbaijan held 41 percent of the remaining refugees in that province at year's end.

The extent of return was dramatic elsewhere as well. Bakhtaran Province, which saw the arrival of 538,000 in April, had a remaining refugee population of 10,210 at year's end, the majority of whom had arrived in 1988. Kordestan Province, with 254,000 refugees at the height of the influx, was hosting 20,919 in December. Only about one-fifth of the remaining refugees were living in seven camps; most were simply dispersed in Kordestan.

The speed of the repatriation was a source of wonder. Why did the refugees leave so quickly when conditions in Iraq were still so unsettled? The answer is not entirely clear. Although Iran took the necessary steps to sustain lives during the emergency, they clearly signalled their unwillingness to host another large, semi-permanent refugee population for the long term. Bread and potatoes were provided, therefore, but little more. Camps visited by USCR in Kordestan Province, in particular, appeared to be crowded, with movement in or out controlled. Kurdish refugees were not welcome to integrate among the local Iranian Kurds in western Iran, as Afghans had been allowed to do in the east.

Bureaucratic and political snafus plagued the international assistance pipeline. Critically needed food, medicine, and supplies were often diverted or simply warehoused.

The degree of repatriation in the southern province of Khuzestan, where the refugee population was comprised primarily of Iraqi Shi'ites, was less dramatic than in the north, where the Kurds sought refuge. Nevertheless, from a peak of 68,460 earlier in the year, the refugee population had been reduced to 29,940 by December.

In addition to the direct influx of Iraqi Shi'ites into Iran, the Islamic Republic also agreed to take 4,000 refugees who had been stranded in the Iraq-Kuwait demilitarized zone, and whom Kuwait refused to admit. These refugees were flown to Tehran via Kuwait, and from there bused to Khuzestan. Despite the large-scale movement back to Iraq, it was not entirely one-way, as the returnees remained uncertain about conditions in Iraq. For example, in late July, after renewed fighting in Suleymaniya, about 40,000 people fled again to the Iranian border, and some thousands crossed over. This group also returned quickly, however, as the Kurdish guerrillas succeeded in taking control of Suleymaniya.

At the height of the refugee influx, before mass repatriations occurred, Iran hosted the largest number of refugees of any country in the world. In addition to the 1.4 million Iraqis, who had arrived in 1991, Iran was already hosting about 500,000 Iraqis in refugee-like circumstances whose flight was related to the Iran-Iraq war (about 400,000) or its aftermath (about 100,000—the "Halabjah" group). Some of the long-term Iraqi refugees clustered around three settlements, Azri near Luristan, Jahram, near Shiraz, and Resmar, near Khuramabad. Most, however, were living in urban centers, and were well integrated with the local economy.

In November, Iran announced that it had handed over to Iraqi authorities the last 421 registered Iraqi POWs from the

Iran-Iraq war. The POW issue remained contentious, however. While acknowledging that the 421 returnees were indeed POWs, the Iraqi regime said that Iran had returned another 1,000 Iraqis who, in fact, were refugees, not prisoners of war, who had fled the country during the Gulf War.

Adding to the 1991 cohort were about 10,000 Kuwaiti refugees and hundreds of third country nationals fearing persecution in their home countries. By year's end, most of these had moved on. At that time, UNHCR was still assisting a group of 205 third country nationals at the Veramin camp about 31 miles from Tehran. The largest nationality represented were Somalis, numbering 107. There were also 80 Eritreans. All but 50 of the 230 Iraqi Assyrian Christians in the Veramin camp in late 1990 were resettled in New Zealand in 1991.

Afghan Refugees The largest group of refugees was the Afghans, earlier estimated at 2.35 million, but according to a new census, now numbering 3,061,110. Many of the Afghan refugees have resided in Iran's eastern provinces for more than a decade. The increase of more than 700,000 in the Afghan refugee census is due primarily to the registration of previously unregistered refugees. However, despite the repatriation of as many as 60,000 in 1990, thousands more continued to arrive in Iran in 1991.

In May, bombardments and fighting in the Ghurian and Zendah Jan regions of Afghanistan forced some 30,000 civilians to flee to the Iranian border area, where food and water were reportedly in short supply.

The overwhelming majority of the Afghan refugees were living in cities where they were economically self-sufficient, but often in occupations at the low-end of the socio-economic ladder. About a half million of the Afghans live in villages and spontaneous settlements in Khorasan and Sistan-Baluchistan provinces in the east. An estimated 62,600 Afghans repatriated during 1991.

Iranian Displaced, Exiles The number of people who remain internally displaced as a result of the Iran-Iraq war is unclear, as reports about their return to reconstructed areas have been sporadic. In October, the delegate to the Majles, the Iranian parliament, from Khuzestan Province said that only one-eighth of the city of Khorramshahr had been rebuilt in a two-year period. He said that about 80,000 people had returned to the city, but that only 3,600 homes had been rebuilt, so that most who had moved back were living in ruins and abandoned houses. The continued presence of land mines and undefused explosives in villages in the Shalamcheh area were preventing the return of other displaced persons, he said.

The first formal repatriation began for Iranian refugees who fled to Iraq when the Iran-Iraq war started. At least five groups of refugees, purported by the Iranian authorities to have been affiliated with the opposition *Mojahedin-e Khalq*, returned to the Islamic Republic during the year.

Hundreds of thousands of Iranians are believed to remain in political exile from Iran, even though many of them have not formally applied for refugee status. The assassination of former Iranian Prime Minister Shahpur Bakhtiar on August 6 in Paris, as well as assassinations of other prominent exiles during the past several years, makes refugees wary of official Iranian invitations to return. On March 20, Iran announced that draft evaders and deserters from the Iran-Iraq war would no longer be punished. Subsequently, the European Commission on Human Rights examined the case of an Iranian deserter facing deportation from Denmark. The deserter, who was convicted on several charges of attempted rape, had argued that he would face torture or death if returned.

How and whether to encourage exiled Iranians to return was the subject of vigorous debate within Iran. In a sermon on the subject on July 12, President Rafsanjani said that "anyone who wishes to return should adapt himself with the country's moral and revolutionary code of conduct. If they have cases standing against them, they should go to court here." While saying Iranians should return from exile, he implied that political opponents should be prevented from leaving. "Who thinks that when someone flees from Iran and goes abroad he will remain morally healthy?" he asked. "If those who flee are counterrevolutionaries," he said, "they will be reorganized abroad and turned into a lever to embarrass us by telling lies, making films, and writing articles against the revolution to spread poison against the revolution." He expressed particularly harsh views against Iranians who apply for political asylum in the West. "What kind of an Iranian is one who applies for political asylum? Can anyone count on that person as an Iranian? He is a person forced to obey. He is a person forced to carry their loads. He is a person forced to spy for them."

The President's remarks were criticized in the Majles for being too soft. Sadeq Khalkhali, a deputy from Qom, said that the President's invitation for Iranians to return would mean "having the supporters of American culture coming back to this country to rule and settle."

Iraq

Iraq was the epicenter of the human tidal wave that shook the Middle East in 1990 and 1991. The first mass forced migration occurred in the immediate aftermath of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. The first week of September 1990 brought the first of a series of hungry, miserable crowds at Iraq's borders seeking escape. At that time, about 75,000 were stranded in a desolate no-man's land on the Iraq-Jordanian border.

The great bulk of displaced people at that time were third country nationals who had been working in Iraq and Kuwait and who had no fear of persecution in their home countries. Despite initial confusion, the international community quickly and efficiently responded, succeeding in repatriating about one million Third World nationals.

After the U.S.-led coalition entered the war on January 16, 1991, and the air-war on Iraq itself began, there was little movement out of the country since the roads were treacherous and fuel scarce. Finding an open border was also difficult. The Syrian-Iraqi border had been closed since 1978, the border with Turkey was closed shortly after the air war began, and those crossing into Jordan during the air war were reduced to a trickle. Iran remained the only accessible international frontier. Thousands of displaced third country nationals who had managed the 500-mile journey through the desert from Baghdad to the Jordanian border were not allowed to leave Iraq because they lacked exit visas. Even after the February 28 ceasefire, and until the first week in March, only a small number had moved—4,455 to Turkey, less than a thousand to Jordan, and fewer than 300 to Syria. But by then the shortlived Shi'ite revolt in the south was already being crushed, as Basra was retaken by Saddam's forces on March 8 and some 13,000 Iraqi Shi'ites fled into Iran. By early May, the number fleeing into southwestern Iran had reached about 70,000.

On March 15, Republican guard units stormed the Shi'ite holy city of Karbala, causing thousands of Shi'ites to flee south toward Kuwait, as well. But Kuwait was blocked to them. Instead, they were held in the zone of southern Iraq by U.S. forces and congregated in an encampment in the town of Safwan near the border with Kuwait, where some 15,000 gathered.

By the first week in April, after Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's forces had suppressed both the Shi'ite revolt in the south and the Kurdish uprising in the north, some 700,000 Iraqi refugees were stampeding into Iran—both north and south, Kurds and Shi'ites—and about half that number toward Turkey. Although the Iraqi refugees fleeing to Iran were able to cross that border, those fleeing to Turkey were confined to the immediate border area, an inhospitable and remote mountainous region (see Turkey and Iran reports).

International attention became riveted on the catastrophe at the Iraq-Turkish border, however, and, on April 5, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 688 demanding an end to the repression of Iraq's civilian population, noting the "massive flow of refugees towards and across international frontiers" caused by that repression, and declaring that movement of refugees a threat to "international peace and security in the region." Resolution 688 demanded that Iraq "allow immediate access by international humanitarian organizations to all those in need of assistance in all parts of Iraq."

On April 18, Iraq concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the UN Secretary General's Executive Delegate, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, allowing the UN to provide humanitarian assistance to displaced persons and returnees.

However, before those UN operations could begin on April 16, the United States, France, and Britain began sending troops into northern Iraq to create a safe haven zone for refugees about 100 miles long and 25 miles deep stretching along the western end of the Turkish-Iraqi border and including the city of Zakho.

As U.S. forces were stepping up efforts in the north—building refugee camps, organizing the assistance pipeline—in what was dubbed Operation Provide Comfort, they were simultaneously organizing their pullout from the southern zone, creating considerable anxiety among the displaced Iraqis at Safwan. With the cooperation of Saudi Arabia and Iran, however, most of the estimated 40,000 Iraqis along the Iraq-Kuwait border were relocated (see Saudi Arabia and Iran reports). Despite relocating about 20,000 of the Iraqis to Saudi Arabia (more than 8,400 from Safwan and about 11,000 from Al Sadah were transported to Saudi Arabia's Rafha camp) and 4,000 to Iran, a residual population of about 2,000 remained along the border, mostly in the Abdali II camp. They included stateless Arabs, known as "Bidoon," and Palestinians, for whom Saudi Arabia and Kuwait denied any responsibility, as well as some Iraqis lacking documentation or refusing to go to Saudi Arabia or Iran. The U.S. pullout ended on May 9 after the UN observer force was deployed in the demilitarized zone.

Another large group of displaced persons in southern Iraq was almost unknown to the outside world. Estimates of their numbers ranging from 80,000 to 800,000, these were mostly Shi'ites who fled north from Basra into the marshlands, where the Iraqi army trapped them, stopping their flight into Iran. The few refugees who managed to cross into Iran from this area reported that conditions in the swamps were horrendous, with severe shortages of food and medicine.

Meanwhile, in the northern safe haven zone, U.S., British, and French forces secured routes from the mountain encampments on the Turkish border, built "way stations" for returnees, and assisted in transporting displaced Kurds either directly to their homes or to a series of camps constructed around Zakho. Although 15,000 to 20,000 per day were moving into the security zone in early May, many Kurds along the border waited until Coalition forces moved as far south as Dahok—a major Kurdish city of about 400,000, from which many of the displaced had fled—before leaving the border area.

After the return of nearly all of the displaced Kurds, many remained insecure, particularly returnees from Iran, many of whom stayed close to the Iranian border. By the end of 1991, more than 700,000 Iraqis who had fled in the spring remained displaced. The displaced, most of whom remain in the border regions of northern and eastern Iraq, fall roughly into three categories: 1) persons who have been prevented from returning to their homes in areas under government control, such as Kirkuk and Mosul; 2) persons who have returned to squat in the rubble of their original villages, among the thousands destroyed from 1988–1990 when Saddam Hussein attempted to create a 20-mile deep, depopulated *cordon sanitaire* along Iraq's borders with Iran and Turkey; and 3) persons newly displaced due to renewed outbreaks of violence starting in October 1991. Iraqi forces renewed shelling and periodic helicopter attacks on the Kurdish population along the line separating Kurdish and government forces, hitting such towns as Kalar and Kifri. Kurds still living in areas under central government control were also seriously harassed. This resulted in an estimated 300,000 persons becoming displaced, many for the second, third, or fourth time, just as winter was coming. The newly displaced were about evenly divided between the Suleymaniya and Irbil areas, with perhaps the larger number gravitating to the vicinity of Irbil.

Although relatively few among the displaced population were staying in camps, those who did reside in camps at Halabjah and Penjwin left in search of warmer shelter with the approach of winter. By year's end, only one more or less formal camp remained for internally displaced persons, a sprawling tent city, Sayed Sadiq, built on the ruins of a demolished village near Suleymaniya. Some 11,830 families were living there in tents in October, but this camp population also dropped sharply—by about half—with the onset of cold winter weather. Nevertheless, the UN provided 235,829 persons in the Sayed Sadiq area with food in December, indicating that many remained in the vicinity of the camp. Others, however, did seek shelter in the city of Suleymaniya, which was taken by Kurdish guerrillas in early October and remained under Kurdish control at that time. Many public buildings in Suleymaniya were being renovated to accommodate displaced persons. In some cases, due to lack of heat, displaced persons were living in tents inside of abandoned factories and other public buildings.

An internal economic embargo imposed by the Baghdad regime on Kurdish areas exacerbated shortages of medicines and other critical supplies for a population struggling to stay alive. Food and fuel for the Kurdish areas had to be purchased at inflated prices from smugglers in Turkey and Iran.

However, medicines were in short supply throughout the country, and given the strains of the international embargo on Iraq, the destruction caused by the war, and the continuing fear and insecurity in the country, it was hard to say if the Kurds of the north were in worse shape than many other hard-hit populations in other parts of the country. By year's end, malnutrition and water borne diseases, such as typhoid, were being reported in large numbers in the south, particularly in Basra and Amara. Independent, nongovernmental observers were estimating that at least 70,000 Iraqi civilians had died from hardships such as lack of medical care and poor food distribution since the end of the war.

Iranian Refugees Although better known as a producer of refugees, Iraq also played host to about 63,000 Iranian refugees during the Iran-Iraq war. The majority, about 40,000, have lived in the Al-Tash camp west of Baghdad and south of Ramadi. Another estimated 23,000 lived in 15 villages in the Nissah and Oasid districts in southern Iraq. Finally, about 800 politically active Iranian Kurds were located at Shomeli, a small, closed camp to the southeast of Baghdad near the town of Ilah. As war and civil strife engulfed the area surrounding the Shomeli camp, it was evacuated and its inhabitants dispersed. Most, between 400 and 500, were transferred to Al-Tash. The remainder headed towards Jordan or to the north. Many of the 23,000 refugees in southern Iraq are also believed to have been dispersed by the war. By year's end, more than 15,000 had voluntarily repatriated to Iran. Another 15,000 Iranian refugees expressed a willingness to repatriate to Iran from Al-Tash.

In fact, UNHCR reopened its Baghdad office, which was closed at the end of 1990, in order to identify Iranians wishing to go home. A joint Iran-Iraq governmental committee was formed to coordinate the repatriation of Iranian refugees late in 1991, and six groups were officially repatriated before year's end. Iranian reports on the repatriations attributed them to members of the opposition *Mojahedin-e Khalq*, who, they allege, had renounced their affiliation with that group.

Kurdish children at a refugee camp in Iran. At the peak of the mass exodus of refugees from Iraq in April 1991, more than 1.4 million Iraqi refugees fled to Iran. Middle East Watch/S. Marks

Israel

In 1991, about 167,000 Soviets immigrated to Israel, a lower number than in 1990, when 181,759 arrived. Although absorbing nearly 350,000 new immigrants in a two-year span presented quite a challenge, the number of arrivals was less than half of the 400,000 that Israeli officials had predicted in 1991.

While scud missile attacks in January accounted for an initial drop in new arrivals from the monthly record of 34,000 reached in December 1990, a failing Israeli economy seemed to account for the slowdown in Soviet immigration as the year progressed. Unemployment rates in Israel reached nearly 12 percent for its own citizens, and more than 30 percent among the immigrants, and the Israeli press put the unemployment rate among new immigrants twice as high as the official count. Housing was also not only scarce and expensive, but became politically difficult for new immigrants to deal with. As the government began building tens of thousands of new housing units in the occupied territories, the new arrivals showed a preference for living within Israel proper, particularly in urban areas. While apartments in the occupied territories stood empty, many immigrant families were doubling and tripling up in apartments in Tel Aviv. A poll conducted by the Israeli Finance Ministry indicated that only 1.1 percent of new immigrants expressed an interest in living in the occupied territories. More than 46 percent said that they preferred living in the central region of Israel, 32 percent in the north, 12 percent in Jerusalem, and 7.8 percent in the south. The World Zionist Organization announced in October that 3,103 new immigrants had settled in the occupied territories since January 1989. Another 15,544 had moved to Jerusalem, most of them, it seemed, into areas of east Jerusalem outside the pre-1967 borders.

Ironically, another factor in the slowdown in Soviet immigration was the new Soviet emigration law, which came into effect, in part, on July 1. Although widening and liberalizing exit permission, it also required passports for those leaving the country. The bureaucracy hadn't caught up with the new law, and paperwork glitches stalled many seeking to leave.

Disenchantment with life in Israel seemed to account for some emigration of new immigrants. In November, the Interior Ministry said that 2,780 immigrants who arrived in 1990 had not returned out of a total of 4,767 who left Israel during the year. To discourage second thoughts about remaining in Israel, the travel loans that help bring the Soviet Jews to Israel are only forgiven after five year's residence in the country. Soviet Jews who apply for an Israeli passport to travel abroad reportedly are denied the passports unless they first repay their transportation loans in full. Soviet Jewish immigration took off briefly in the early 1970s when about 150,000 arrived. However, emigration became more restricted in the mid-70s, slowing the Soviet immigrant flow to a trickle. In the late 70s and early 80s, emigration from the Soviet Union picked up again, but most Soviet Jews "dropped out" upon reaching Vienna and opted for the United States over Israel. The percentage of Soviet Jews going to Israel had been 95 percent or higher in the years 1965–1973, but it steadily declined throughout the 70s and 80s. By 1989, the percentage choosing Israel over the United States or other destinations had declined to 16.8 percent.

Starting in October 1989, the United States began processing Soviet refugees directly from Moscow and raised the annual Soviet refugee admissions ceiling to 50,000, about 80 percent of whom were expected to be Soviet Jews who might otherwise have immigrated to Israel.

Ethiopian Refugees On May 24–25, about 14,500 Ethiopian Jews were flown to Israel following the ouster of Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Mariam. In a policy that has roots in Israel's integration of earlier waves of immigrants, Ethiopian children from the May influx were separated from their parents and educated in segregated boarding schools, where they received intensive Hebrew-language instruction and cultural orientation. Recent immigrant children from the Soviet Union attend regular Israeli schools.

Before the May airlift, Israel had resettled about 23,000 Jews from Ethiopia since 1984. Unemployment among Ethiopians has been high—45 percent among those over age 35—and about 10 percent have remained in government "absorption centers" for about seven years, even though these centers are intended as temporary transitional housing for new immigrants.

Occupied Territories

In the fourth year of the Palestinian uprising—the *intifada*—violence seemed to reach a plateau, no longer as furious as previous years, but further consolidating the division of Palestinians and Israelis into fixed enemy camps. There were fewer street battles between Palestinians and Israeli military and security forces, but Palestinian violence and Israeli repression became more targeted. The presence of Israeli forces in the refugee camps of the occupied territories declined noticeably in 1991; at the same time, Palestinian militants more openly exerted control over the population. Although face-to-face peace talks did begin in 1991, the gap between Israelis and Palestinians, particularly in the wake of Palestinian and Jordanian support for Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War, was wider than ever, and, by year's end, an accord seemed no nearer than when the talks began.

From the end of the Gulf War through the end of November, the 26,835 clashes recorded by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) was half the number recorded for the same period in 1990. Although fewer in number, the attacks were growing more lethal; Palestinians' use of firearms in attacks on soldiers or settlers rose by 50 percent over 1990, according to the IDF. Grenade and molotov cocktail attacks were ten times higher than in 1990. For the year, 187 Palestinians were killed in the West Bank, as well as six Israeli civilians and one soldier, according to the IDF. In December, on the fourth anniversary of the *intifada*, the IDF released statistics on the uprising's cumulative toll, including 707 Palestinians killed by the IDF, 517 killed by other Palestinians for suspected collaboration; 16 Israeli civilians and 11 soldiers killed; 45,000 Palestinians arrested, and 66 deported. The IDF recorded 138,354 "disturbances" in the four-year period. However, the IDF figures were much lower than other sources. On August 11, UNRWA recorded the 1,000th Palestinian killed by the IDF since the start of the *intifada*.

Although the *intifada* originated in the refugee camps of the Gaza Strip, it grew to include city and town populations. Distinguishing the refugee casualties from the Palestinian population became difficult, and UNRWA, whose mandate covers 430,083 registered refugees in the West Bank and 528,684 in the Gaza Strip, began providing temporary emergency assistance to nonrefugees in the territories. This included emergency medical assistance for the injured. During its July 1990–June 1991 reporting year, UNRWA noted that the Israeli authorities closed UNRWA health centers on a number of occasions.

Statistics compiled by the Palestine Human Rights Information Center indicate that about one-third of the Palestinians killed by the IDF in 1990 were located in refugee camps. As in recent years, UNRWA again in 1991 protested repeated incidents involving harassment of their staff and frequent incursions by security forces into UNRWA schools, clinics, and distribution centers. Such incidents in 1991 included the arrests and physical abuse of local staff members and threats and interference with international staff. In UNRWA's annual reporting period, ending on June 30, 1991, the agency reported 251 incursions into agency installations by members of the Israeli security forces in the West Bank and 367 such incursions in the Gaza Strip. At times, UNRWA premises were used to interrogate local residents. Israeli soldiers also interfered with UNRWA ambulances, in some cases shooting at them or preventing them from transporting patients to clinics and hospitals.

Following a series of stabbing attacks within Israel by Palestinian workers from the territories, suspicion of Arab workers in Israel became increasingly intense and their ability to move about within Israel quite restricted. In the first half of the year, about 84,000 Palestinians made the daily commute to Israel from the occupied territories, according to the Histadrut, Israel's national labor union, a 14.3 drop in the first half of 1991 compared to the last half of 1990. According to UNRWA estimates, the number of Gazans crossing each day into Israel was only 20,000 at mid-year.

The crossing point between the Gaza Strip and Israel has become more secure than most international borders, with barricades, inspection of every car upon entry, and requirements for special travel permits. To cross into Israel to work, Gazans must produce a red identity card, a computerized card with a magnetic strip on it, and a work permit. Work permits are issued only to persons who have received security clearance and who have paid taxes and utility bills in full. Workers cross the checkpoint on foot and board buses on the Israeli side to reach their destinations.

The Gulf War created an even deeper wedge between the Palestinians and Israelis; as Iraqi scud missiles were landing in Israel, some Palestinians were seen cheering Saddam Hussein, who presented himself as a champion of the Palestinian cause. When the air-war started, Israel imposed a 24-hour-a-day curfew on the Gaza Strip for four weeks, causing widespread hardship, as residents were unable to work or farm.

Economic life in the territories, particularly Gaza, became much harder. In response to Palestinian support for Saddam Hussein, millions of dollars of aid was withdrawn by Arab Gulf states. Also, there was no longer a large Palestinian workforce in Kuwait and other Gulf states to send home remittances. Israel rejected an UNRWA appeal to allow some 40,000 Palestinians who had been living in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to return to the Gaza Strip. These Palestinians left the Gaza Strip prior to 1967, so received documentation neither from Egypt nor Israel. Israel did permit some 7,000 Palestinians who left after 1967 to return to the Gaza Strip, as well as about 30,000 to the West Bank. After the war, economic conditions in the Gaza Strip became even more severe. Refugees held sit-ins at several UNRWA distribution centers to call for increased assistance.

During the war, as a chemical or biological weapons attack on Israel appeared to be Saddam's intent, the question of whether gas masks would be distributed to Palestinians became critical. Although the Israeli Supreme Court ruled on January 14 that the Defense Ministry was obligated to distribute the masks, only 170,000 were made available for a population of 1.5 million. On January 25, USCR wrote to the Israeli Prime Minister saying, "As the occupying power, Israel bears a direct responsibility for the citizens of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. . . . Providing them with essential life-saving protection is a humanitarian imperative, even in the face of outrageous provocations."

The Prime Minister's office responded by saying that Israeli citizens paid for the gas masks through deductions from their social security payments, but that "persons residing in this country—even permanent residents—make no social security payments, and therefore they did not qualify for these particular masks." The letter went on to say that "a supply of masks was obtained for all such people who could secure them against payment of a nominal fee."

The aftermath of the Gulf War seemed to bring changes in the *intifada* as well—the classic street confrontations between rock throwing youths and club-swinging Israeli soldiers gave way, to a degree to inward-turning confrontations. During April and May, more than twice as many Palestinians were killed by other Palestinians than by the army. Many of those killed, sometimes quite brutally, were accused of being collaborators. Clashes also appeared to increase between armed youths representing rival political factions, particularly Hamas, the Islamic resistance, with a strong base in the Gaza Strip, versus factions of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Tensions heated up again when the peace talks began. For the first two weeks of December, Ramallah was under a strict curfew, following the killing of an Israeli settler on December 1. UNRWA distributed food to about 2,000 refugee families living in camps in the area of the curfew. The full curfew was lifted on December 15, but Palestinians in the area were still prohibited from leaving their homes from 5 pm to 4 am. At the conclusion of the 24-hour curfew, Israeli forces also swept through the Aksar refugee camp near Nablus, making house-to-house searches and arresting some residents. Also, at the end of the curfew, Jewish settlers entered Ramallah and two other towns, smashing windows and destroying property. On December 15, the Israeli army announced that the West Bank's one million residents were prohibited from being within 150 yards of roads outside towns after dark.

Violence also heated up in Gaza in December. In a two-week period, 98 Palestinians were injured in clashes. The most serious violence occurred in the Shaboura quarter of the Rafah camp on December 18, in which 40 Palestinians suffered gunshot wounds.

Intifada-related disruptions to the educational system for refugee children continued to cloud their future. According to UNRWA tabulations, in the six month period from September 1990 through March 1991, UNRWA schools in the West Bank lost 51.3 percent of scheduled teaching time, and UNRWA schools in the Gaza Strip lost 48.2 percent of scheduled class time. Most of the lost days were due to closures by military order, accounting for 73.4 percent of lost teaching time in the West Bank and 67.2 percent in Gaza. General strikes accounted for 13 to 14 percent of lost class time, curfews accounted for 10 to 14 percent.

Although fewer expulsions of Palestinian residents of the territories occurred in 1991, the policy remained in effect. On May 18, the IDF expelled four Palestinians from the Gaza Strip to Lebanon. All four were registered refugees, and two were UNRWA employees. The two UNRWA employees had served prison sentences for throwing grenades until their release in 1985 as part of a prisoner exchange deal. After the deportation orders were issued in March, the UN Security Council called on Israel "to desist from deporting Palestinians and to ensure the safe return of those deported."

In a letter to the Israeli government, USCR objected to the expulsions as a violation of Article 49 of the Geneva Convention. The Prime Minister's office replied by saying that the Israeli Supreme Court had examined the proper application of this article and found the "legislative purpose" of Article 49 to be "to avoid acts similar to the atrocities committed by the Germans during World War II, when millions of civilians were deported to extermination and forced labor camps; and not as a categorical prohibition of any expulsion." USCR had written that the plain language of Article 49 "absolutely bars either individual or mass forced transfers of civilian populations in occupied territories regardless of the motive of the occupying power."

Jordan

The Jordanian economy was left in tatters in the wake of the Gulf War, as King Hussein's balancing act of accommodating a majority Palestinian population of 1.7 million in his country of about 3 million was made even more difficult by the influx of another 300,000 Palestinians expelled from Kuwait and other Gulf states. Although called "returnees" by the government, many of the "returning" Palestinians had lived in Kuwait for more than 20 years, and their children and grandchildren—also "returnees"—were born there. Children under the age of 15 represented 45 percent of the returnee population.

Having lost their homes, jobs, and savings in the Gulf states, the returnees, many of whom had lived well in Kuwait and held responsible jobs, mostly crowded into already overcrowded slums in Amman and Zarka, where rents tripled, and new arrivals often were forced to stay with relatives. More often than not, they were also forced to join the ranks of the unemployed. Unemployment among the general population stood at 32 percent, and at 83 percent among the returnees.

The Gulf War influx has raised the total population of Jordan by about 10 percent, and strained Jordan's ability to serve the basic needs of the refugees, as well as other impoverished segments of its population. UNRWA school enrollment increased by 6,000 and government schools by 56,000 as a result of returning children. The mass return created a triple threat to Jordan's economy. Jordan lost the lucrative remittances that expatriates in Kuwait had sent home, and would have to spend hundreds of millions of dollars for education and social services for the new arrivals. Exacerbating the situation was the end of economic aid from Kuwait and Iraq, which had amounted to $185 million prior to the war. In March, Crown Prince Hassan estimated Jordan's losses in trade, aid, and remittances due to the war had reached $1.5 billion. By the end of that same month, the Gulf Cooperation Council dug the hole deeper by cutting off its assistance to Jordan. The United States was not in a sympathetic mood either. Early in the year, President Bush had suspended economic and military aid to Jordan in response to its stand in the war. Then, in March, the U.S. Senate voted to cut $35 million in economic aid and $20 million in military assistance to Jordan, a move opposed by the Bush Administration.

A UNICEF study early in the year noted "instant and widespread economic devastation" in Jordan as a result of the war, and found a quarter of Jordan's children under the age of 12 to be at risk of malnutrition and poor health. The report said that one in three Jordanians—about a million people—were living near or below the poverty line.

UNRWA has registered 960,212 Palestinian refugees in Jordan in 1991, of whom 76 percent lived outside the ten refugee camps established for them. It was not yet clear at year's end how the UNRWA rolls might be affected by the mass return of Palestinians from the Gulf.

Among areas under the UNRWA mandate, Palestinian refugees in Jordan have a unique legal position. In Jordan, they are accorded full citizenship rights, including the right to vote. The UN resolutions that define which Palestinians are refugees and what durable solutions should be sought on their behalf differ from the refugee definition in the UN Refugee Convention and in the durable solutions found under UNHCR's mandate. Palestinian refugees are defined as persons who resided in Palestine two years prior to the outbreak of hostilities in 1948, who lost their homes and livelihoods a result of that war. The UNRWA mandate recognizes only repatriation or compensation as permanent solutions for the Palestinian refugee problem. Therefore, citizenship in another country, such as Jordan—which would represent the cessation of refugee status for other refugee groups covered by the UN Convention and Protocol—does not terminate a Palestinian's refugee status.

An exception to the offer of Jordanian citizenship is made for those Palestinians who originated in the Gaza Strip, which was never claimed as part of Jordan. Some Palestinians who had never lived in the West Bank or Jordan were apparently accepted as evacuees. Those who did manage to enter were believed to have joined relatives in the Jarash camp, which holds mostly Gazans, and is reputed to be the most run-down refugee camp in Jordan. In August, King Hussein said, "If there is any way that we can figure out how they [i.e., Gazans] can pass through here and return home, we will do what we can, if all the others respond to this need."

Third country nationals fleeing into Jordan did not present the same problem in the first two months of 1991—when less than 30,000 arrived—as they had in 1990 during the first phase of the war when 865,000 displaced persons crossed her borders. The majority of evacuees, Egyptians, were able to take ferry trips home via the port of Aqaba. Lebanese and Syrian nationals traveled overland from the al-Ruwayshid border post on the Jordanian-Iraqi border to al-Ramtha on the Jordanian-Syrian border. The International Organization for Migration helped to fly home Vietnamese, Sudanese, Indians, Bangladeshis, and Sri Lankans. Hundreds of Somali nationals stayed in Jordan, seeking the protection of UNHCR based on expressed fears of returning home. Smaller numbers of Ethiopians and Liberians also approached UNHCR for protection.

Kuwait

Following the withdrawal of Iraqi troops on February 26, as Kuwait began the process of bringing back about 400,000 of its own citizens from exile, the country also embarked on a policy to rid itself of much of its noncitizen population. This policy would have far-reaching consequences, particularly since Kuwait held the unique distinction prior to the Iraq invasion of having only 28 percent of its population Kuwaiti citizens.

The government started by revoking all temporary residence permits for noncitizens. It indicated that all noncitizens would have to have a security clearance before being issued residence permits.

In fact, in the immediate aftermath of the liberation of Kuwait, there was no orderly review of noncitizens' status of the kind envisioned. Instead, government authorities, as well as vigilante-like resistance groups, began arresting thousands of foreign residents, many of whom had lived in the country their entire lives, but due to the restrictive citizenship laws were never able to achieve Kuwaiti citizenship. Only about 200 of those arrested were actually charged and tried by martial law courts for "collaboration" or other crimes associated with the Iraqi occupation. Middle East Watch found that at least 1,500 were summarily expelled, including some who were acquitted of the charge of collaboration. The most frequently deported were Iraqis, Palestinians, and stateless Arabs, known as "*Bidoon*".

One of the first of the summary expulsions to be well documented occurred on June 11, when 115 people—85 men, 10 women, and 20 children—were taken by bus to the Iraqi border and forced across at night to a land-mined area without flashlights, food, or water. A *Washington Post* reporter at the scene caught the tragedy as it unfolded. "Please don't leave us here! " pleaded a woman, "Saddam's people will kill us." A UN observer approached a Kuwaiti official saying, "What gives you the authority to leave these people here?" The official replied, "These people are guilty. They are Iraqis and Palestinians."

That same day, June 11, USCR wrote to the Kuwaiti government calling for the immediate cessation of expulsions of anyone expressing a fear of persecution in Iraq.

By June 20, the number forced into Iraq had reached 400. On July 7, Kuwait gave assurances that it would not return refugees to territories where they would face persecution. However, according to the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, another 585 were expelled to Iraq from July 5 to July 13.

Prior to the Iraqi invasion, some 320,000 Palestinians had been living in Kuwait. Most of them carried Jordanian travel documents. Some 180,000 of the Palestinians who fled from Kuwait to Jordan during the Iraqi occupation were not permitted to return. After the liberation, many Palestinians still living in Kuwait—including all government employees—were fired from their jobs, and their children were denied access to government schools, in effect, making it impossible for them to continue living in Kuwait. More serious allegations, such as torture and killings by Kuwaiti vigilante squads, also surfaced. On March 6, USCR wrote to the U.S. Attorney General requesting that his designation of Temporary Protected Status for citizens of Kuwait be extended to Palestinian residents of that country, in light of the dangers they were facing.

The Kuwaiti government set a November 15 deadline, by which time all remaining Palestinians in the country were to have found jobs or face deportation. Although the deadline was later extended, about 60,000 Palestinians left for Jordan as a result of direct or indirect coercion subsequent to the Iraqi withdrawal.

However, between 23,000 and 27,000 who had come to Kuwait from Gaza were particularly desperate, because neither Jordan, Israel, nor Egypt would accept them. Egypt, which had occupied Gaza until 1967 (but unlike Jordan in relation to the West Bank, never annexed it) took the position that it was not obliged to receive them, and did not grant them visas to travel to Gaza. Nor would Israel allow them to enter. Consequently, about 2,000 Palestinians were expelled to Iraq, and thousands of others, seeing no alternative, entered Iraq themselves.

By December, the Palestinian population in Kuwait had been reduced to 80,000. Persons who visited Hawali, the once-bustling Palestinian quarter in Kuwait city, in December, told USCR that it is now a virtual ghosttown. Palestinians who left Kuwait say that the Kuwaiti government has a target population of 30,000 Palestinians, comprised of people who can prove that they did not collaborate with the Iraqis and who have a Kuwaiti sponsor for employment.

The November 15 deadline—later delayed to December 31, then, again, to May 31, 1992—also applied to about 250,000 *Bidoon*, whose residency permits were scheduled to expire on that date. Many of the *Bidoon*, which means "without" in Arabic, have lived—*without* citizenship—in Kuwait for generations. In August, 1,172, mostly *Bidoon*, were being held at the Abdali camp just inside the Kuwaiti border, awaiting security clearance for entry. Inmates included former members of the Kuwaiti army whom the Iraqis had taken prisoner. The Kuwaiti armed forces and police were about 70 percent *Bidoon* prior to the Iraqi invasion. On October 11, the Abdali camp was closed. About 800 of its inhabitants had been sent to various countries; 566 were admitted to Kuwait. By the final week in December, the ICRC was reporting that between 50 and 100 *Bidoon* per week were being deported to Iraq, but they indicated that Kuwait was complying with the Geneva Conventions in carrying out the deportations.

Lebanon

Lebanon began to get back on track in 1991 after 15 years of unrest causing the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. Throughout the year, thousands of people returned to rebuild destroyed homes and attempted to patch their lives back and restore a sense of safety and normalcy.

The framework for the peace was the 1989 Ta'if Agreement, an accord calling for more equitable distribution of power and the disbanding of armed militias. At the end of 1990, a new government representing the major political factions, and strongly backed by Syria, came into power pledging to implement the agreement.

Tension rose as an end-of-April deadline neared for the disarmament of the Palestinians, as well as the Lebanese militias. The Palestinians have insisted that their own armed forces are necessary to defend the civilian refugee camp population from attack, as well as to continue armed struggle with Israel. Palestinians remember the 1982 massacres of unarmed civilians by Christian militiamen in the Sabra and Shatila camps, when they were left undefended after the Israeli invasion. Lebanese, on the other hand, remember the "state within a state" created by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in southern Lebanon prior to Israel's 1982 invasion, and resist its reestablishment. In May 1987, the Lebanese Parliament revoked the 1969 Cairo Agreement, which had granted the PLO autonomy in running the refugee camps and had allowed the PLO to establish guerrilla bases in Lebanon.

Gradually, Lebanon's 35,000-man army, supported by 40,000 Syrian troops, extended control in and around Beirut, reuniting the divided city and disarming rival militias in the process. The Palestinian factions in Beirut agreed to disarm, but these were the very factions—called collectively the National Salvation Front—that have been backed by Syria, and therefore were unlikely to openly defy Syrian orders. Extending central Lebanese control to the south, where both Palestinians and Lebanese militias were not controlled by Syria, would prove more difficult. The south, where the largest Palestinian refugee camps are located, is the stronghold not only of the PLO, but also of Lebanon's pro-Iranian Hezbollah faction, which had not joined the governing coalition. PLO chairman Yasser Arafat said that the PLO would not resist the extension of Lebanese central authority, but insisted that Palestinians be allowed to keep their guns for personal protection, as well as to fight Israel and its proxy militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), in the nine-mile-deep "security zone" separating the two countries.

The effort to disarm the Palestinians brought about tense confrontations between the Lebanese army and the Palestinian refugee camp populations, which erupted into open fighting in the first four days of July. In that fighting, at least 52 Palestinians were killed and 184 injured. Palestinian fighters resisted army deployment around the camps of Ein el-Hilweh and Mieh Mieh in the vicinity of Sidon. During the heavy fighting in July, almost all of the civilian inhabitants of Ein el Hilweh and Mieh Mieh fled the camps to safer areas.

The camps in the vicinity of Tyre to the south of Sidon were under army siege for two months. During its deployment in the south, the army also arrested hundreds of Palestinians. The army did not actually enter the camps to disarm the inhabitants. In effect, they allowed Palestinians to keep small caliber weapons within the camps, but severely restricted movement in and out of the camps.

Later in July, when the future relationship between the Palestinians and the Lebanese government was still very much uncertain, USCR wrote to the Lebanese authorities asking them to clarify their position about the rights of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Among the questions posed to the authorities were whether refugees would be allowed to enter and leave the camps freely; whether the Lebanese army intended to enter the camps; who would administer the camps; whether refugees would be accorded the right to work and travel; and who would adjudicate disputes involving Palestinians. The Lebanese government acknowledged the inquiry but did not reply to the specific questions.

USCR learned, however, that part of the agreement that ended the fighting in July stipulated that Palestinian rights would be observed in exchange for their handing heavy weapons over to the Lebanese Army. Lebanon agreed to lift restrictions that have barred Palestinians from entering a large number of trades and occupations. So while armed Palestinian power suffered a noticeable setback in 1991, the Palestinian population in Lebanon, estimated at 350,000, of whom 310,585 are registered by UNRWA as refugees, could look forward to peace at least in relation to their Lebanese neighbors and to a restoration of some rights. Shortly after the fighting ended, most refugees began returning to their homes, and UNRWA was able to resume reconstruction and assistance work. Due to the emergency circumstances in Lebanon, UNRWA has been serving not only the registered refugees, but the unregistered Palestinians as well. About half of the registered refugees live outside the 13 refugee camps in Lebanon. During the year, UNRWA worked for the repair and reconstruction of refugee shelters in the camps of Beirut that had been heavily damaged during the civil war, as well as the homes destroyed in the fighting in the south in the vicinity of Sidon. Still, the number of refugees returning to the Shatila camp in Beirut was lower than expected.

Inter-factional Palestinian fighting in 1991 was less intense than previous years, but not absent. In September 1990, more than 80 people had been killed in Ein el-Hilweh, Lebanon's largest refugee camp, near Sidon. The largest outbreak in 1991 occurred in February in the Mieh Mieh and Ein el-Hilweh camps in suburbs of Sidon and in the Rashidieh camp near Tyre. Fighting between rival factions of Fatah, the central PLO group, caused hundreds of Palestinian families to flee to camps in Beirut and the north.

Israeli air attacks on Palestinian areas continued throughout the year. In the first half of 1991, Israel conducted 12 air raids on Palestinian targets in Lebanon, killing 23 and wounding 96. Shelling from the Israeli-controlled "security zone" also hit the Rashidieh camp, the southernmost Palestinian camp in the country. Shelling in early February caused a majority of the residents to flee the camp. The attack reportedly damaged five refugee shelters. In early November, on the eve of Middle East peace talks in Madrid, about 100,000 villagers in southern Lebanon near the "security zone" were forced to abandon their homes temporarily. First, loudspeakers from SLA positions warned them to leave. This was followed by a massive, five-day artillery bombardment of the area.

Despite the new displacements in November, the trend during the year was for previously displaced to return to their homes or at least to visit them to assess the possibilities of return. At the beginning of the year, an estimated 750,000 persons were internally displaced. The number remaining displaced at the end of the year was undetermined.

Pakistan

Prospects for Afghan refugees in Pakistan during 1991 were still bogged down by a civil war that wouldn't end. The refugees' fate was largely in the hands of *mujahedin* leaders who could not agree among themselves about their goals or on preconditions for repatriation of 3,185,265 registered, and an estimated 406,000 unregistered, Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Unregistered refugees continued to arrive throughout 1991. Most of the refugees reside among 345 refugee villages in the Northwest Frontier Province (68.5 percent), Baluchistan (26 percent), and the Punjab (5.5 percent).

A fragile alliance from the beginning, held together only by a common enemy, the *mujahedin* became more fractious during the year, as open fighting broke out between rival factions.

As international support for the *mujahedin* and assistance to the refugees ebbed during the year, Pakistan grew increasingly concerned about the prospect of large numbers of refugees remaining on her soil without the international support that once had softened the refugees' impact. U.S. aid represented the greatest uncertainty. Once the principal backer of the *mujahedin*, contributing about $250 million a year to the war effort, as well as making Pakistan one of the largest recipients of foreign aid, the United States suspended or drastically curtailed both avenues of support in 1991. As an indication of diminished interest in Afghan refugees on the part of the U.S. government, the State Department announced that, as of April 12, no more Afghans would be registered for the U.S. refugee resettlement program unless they were found to be in immediate danger of loss of life or other compelling circumstances.

With respect to humanitarian assistance; the Office of the Coordinator for the United Nations Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programs relating to Afghanistan (UNOCA) announced in July a $31 million cut in its budget and a $26 million shortfall between pledges and contributions towards the remaining $105 in its budget. A major pledge by Japan remained frozen because its terms required evidence of substantial repatriation, which was not happening. UNHCR's proposed general budget for care and maintenance in Pakistan for 1992 was $4 million less than its 1991 spending level of $32.9 million. The UNHCR sub-office in Karachi was closed in September as a cost-cutting measure.

The UNOCA repatriation program, organized through UNHCR, started slowly in 1990 and continued to run into snags in 1991, as the *mujahedin* leadership viewed it with suspicion and resisted its implementation.

Those who did return in 1991 tended to do so spontaneously, and it was difficult to determine the permanency of their movements. Reports on the numbers of refugees entering and leaving the open Afghan-Pakistan border are not noted for their accuracy. The official measure of permanent repatriation—a UNHCR program for "encashment" of refugee ration books—in fact seemed not to be an exact measure of return. Although some 35,000 ration books were turned in throughout 1991, representing about 200,000 "deregistered" refugees, there is no guarantee that "deregistered" refugees returned to Afghanistan. About two-thirds of those turning in ration books were believed genuinely to return. From the beginning of the program in August 1990 through the end of that year, 13,092 ration books were turned in. In some cases, ration books were allegedly being stolen and cashed in. For example, the district administrator for Pakistan's Commission for Afghan Refugees in Mardin said that he was receiving reports of four to five books stolen per week, virtually a nonexistent problem prior to the encashment program.

Some refugees seeking to turn in their ration books reportedly were harassed by members of the *mujahedin* who oppose refugee repatriation until the Najibullah regime in Kabul is ousted, but

Fighting between the Sri Lankan army and militant Tamil separatists has left at least 600,000 people displaced in Sri Lanka. More than 40,000 Muslims are living in "welfare centers" near Puttalam. USCR/C. Robinson

reports of such incidents seemed to level off during the year.

Iran and Iraqi Refugees Pakistan has not signed the UN Refugee Convention and Protocol, but has been generous, despite social and economic costs to its own society, in providing temporary asylum for Afghan refugees. The attitude has not been nearly so hospitable with regard to refugees from Iran, whom authorities term "illegal entrants." Although they tolerate Iranian—and Iraqi—refugees who are recognized and assisted by UNHCR, authorities seek to have them resettled in third countries. In mid-1991, UNHCR was assisting about 3,000 non-Afghan—mostly Iranian and Iraqi—refugees in Pakistan, and seeking resettlement opportunities for them.

In June, USCR wrote to the government of Pakistan inquiring about an extradition treaty signed with Iran in late May under which Pakistan agreed to extradite "thieves, rebels, smugglers, and *others fleeing Iran.*" USCR said that the extradition agreement raised serious questions about possible violations of the principle of *nonrefoulement.* The letter noted that Pakistan's treatment of Afghan refugees has been "truly generous . . . and worthy of emulation," but said that Iranian refugees in Pakistan "have not been nearly so secure in the knowledge that they will be protected from forced return." The authorities did not respond to the letter.

No progress was made in 1991 for the repatriation of about 260,000 Biharis (known as "stranded Pakistanis") remaining in camps in Bangladesh.

Saudi Arabia

As 1991 dawned, Saudi Arabia was hosting about 300,000 Kuwaiti refugees exiled by the Iraqi occupation of their country. Relatively few of the Kuwaitis required assistance from the Saudi government or from humanitarian agencies for refugees, such as UNHCR, because of support by the Kuwaiti government in exile or their own resources. Overwhelmingly, they resided in hotels and private homes for the duration of the war. With the defeat of Iraq and the restoration of the Kuwaiti royal family, the Kuwaitis in Saudi Arabia drifted back to their homeland.

In the wake of the failed Shi'a uprising in southern Iraq in March, thousands of Iraqi Shi'ites fled to the U.S.-occupied zone of Iraq along the Kuwaiti border. Also, in the occupied zone were Iraqi POWs who refused to repatriate on the grounds that they feared persecution upon return. In early May, tensions rose as U.S. forces prepared to evacuate the area. The residual displaced population stranded in the Kuwait-Iraq border region around Safwan refused to return to government-controlled Iraq, and Kuwait, in turn, refused to admit them.

At this point, Iran and Saudi Arabia stepped in to break the impasse. About 22,000 were airlifted to Saudi Arabia and 4,000 to Iran. The Saudis constructed a camp for them near Rafha, a town bordering Iraq, but considerably west of Kuwait. Conditions at the camp were reportedly good in terms of food, medicines, and other provisions, but refugees were granted no freedom of movement. The Rafha camp was located in a remote area; a barbed wire fence and armed soldiers prevented the refugees from leaving. In late May, refugees complained at the degree of isolation, saying that they had no access to telephones. Telephones were subsequently installed. In December, disturbances were reported at the camp, but details were unavailable. Violence among refugees was reported high, including politically motivated killings.

By the end of 1991, a total of 34,000 Iraqi refugees remained in Saudi Arabia. They were divided into two camps: the civilians, numbering about 21,000, were kept at Rafha, and 13,000 former POWs who refused to repatriate were kept at Tawieh. Although Saudi Arabia determined that the former POWs who refused to go home would be treated as civilian refugees, they were kept in a separate camp. Between September and mid-December, 1,314 Iraqis voluntarily repatriated from Saudi Arabia through the ICRC. At least 3,387 Iraqis repatriated during the year without the participation of UNHCR or ICRC. Although some may have left voluntarily, others, including 283 Iraqi refugees who were forcibly repatriated in December, appear to have been coerced into leaving.

Hundreds of thousands of Yemeni workers were expelled from Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War, and visas and other restrictive measures were taken against Palestinians, Jordanians, Sudanese, and other nationalities whose leaders had tilted toward Iraq during the war.

A group of 951 Somalis were expelled from Saudi Arabia in March, but appeared not to have been harmed upon return.

Sri Lanka

More than one million people have been uprooted by the conflict between the Sri Lankan army and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), seeking a separate Tamil state in the northeast. At least 600,000 people are internally displaced, 210,000 are refugees in India, and an estimated 250,000 more have sought asylum in the West.

About 74 percent of Sri Lanka's population is ethnic Sinhalese and Buddhist. Tamils, who are predominantly Hindu, comprise about 18 percent, with Muslims, Burghers, and Malays making up the remainder. Ever since the former British colony gained independence in 1948, relations between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil minority have been increasingly confrontational.

In 1983, following days of anti-Tamil riots throughout the island, tens of thousands of Tamils fled the country in fear and despair. The LTTE retaliated, starting what some have called Eelam War I, which lasted until 1987. Under the terms of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord, Indian forces sought to keep the peace in northeast but were soon fighting the Tigers themselves.

The Indian troops withdrew from Sri Lanka in March 1990 and, three months later, Eelam War II began when the Tigers broke off peace talks with the Sri Lanka government. Since June 1990, it is believed that at least 12,000 civilians have been killed in the conflict.

From 1987 to 1990, UNHCR operated a repatriation program for an estimated 43,000 Sri Lankan refugees returning from Indian under the terms of the 1987 accord. But with the outbreak of new hostilities in mid-1990, UNHCR found itself strategically located in Mannar district, a locus of substantial internal displacement and the primary launching point for the flight to India.

In November 1990, the agency established two Open Relief Centers (ORC)—one on Mannar Island and another at Madhu on the mainland—to provide temporary relief and some protection to the internally displaced, and to reduce the pressures on those who might otherwise feel compelled to flee to India.

The UNHCR operating budget in Sri Lanka was about $2.2 million in 1991, about 60 percent of which was covered by India. The program distributed government food aid to an average of 50,000 people in the two ORCs and six subcenters. The UNHCR program also supplied water and sanitation and supported primary health care through the cooperation of Medecins sans frontieres (MSF).

Following a visit to Sri Lanka in May and June 1991, USCR published a report, *Sri Lanka: Island of Refugees*, which found, among other things, that "the protection available to displaced persons in the ORCs . . . is substantially better than anything else to be found in the northeast. . . . There is little question that the presence of the UNHCR facilities, and Madhu in particular, has been reassuring to displaced persons and provided them with a meaningfully safe alternative to the camps in Tamil Nadu."

The USCR report cited the "impressive commitment" made by the Sri Lankan government—in conjunction with nongovernmental organizations, UNHCR, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)—to maintain a civil administration and basic relief services in what amounts to a war zone. The conflict itself, however, continued to be anything but exemplary.

On May 3, a Sri Lankan military helicopter fired repeatedly at a well-marked MSF vehicle travelling from Madhu to Vavuniya. All four passengers were seriously injured, and MSF suspended operations in Sri Lanka, pending an official inquiry. Although the government-appointed commission exonerated the military of any wrongdoing, and MSF officials called the findings a "whitewash," MSF resumed operations in the northeast in July.

On June 11, Sri Lankan army troops massacred 67 Tamil civilians in the village of Kokkaddichcholai in Batticaloa district, moments after a Tiger land mine had killed two soldiers. The troops threw 17 people into the crater left by the mine explosion and set them on fire. Another 40 people were burned to death in a nearby rice mill. According to an Asia Watch report, 21 women also may have been raped.

A special commission of inquiry, in this case, called the attack a "deliberate retaliatory action." One officer and four soliders remained in detention at the end of January 1992, and court martial proceedings were pending.

The Tigers, likewise, have been guilty of retaliatory killings of Sinhalese and Muslim civilians, as well as expulsions. Perhaps 100,000 Muslims, a Tamil-speaking minority, have been forced by the LTTE to leave their homes in the north since October 1990. At the time of the USCR visit to Sri Lanka in June 1991, more than 40,000 Muslims were living in 60 "welfare centers" near Puttalam on the western coast, and thousands more were in Colombo.

The USCR report urged the United States and the international community to continue to support the UNHCR and ICRC programs in Sri Lanka. The report also supported U.S. bilateral aid to Sri Lanka to maintain basic relief for displaced persons living in the northeast and the south, but only with conditions. "There must be clear assurances, subject to regular monitoring, that displaced civilians are not subjected to forced relocation, arbitrary arrest and detention, or other abuse at the hands of Sri Lankan security forces."

In late July, the Indian and Sri Lankan governments announced they were collaborating on a plan to "encourage the early and voluntary return of refugees presently in India to their original places of habitation." On August 23, USCR wrote to the Sri Lankan government, expressing concern at the proposed repatriation.

In its October report, USCR said that "Any further discussions between the Indian and Sri Lankan governments regarding the voluntary repatriation of the refugees in Tamil Nadu should involve the UNHCR representatives for the respective countries. . . .The prospect of organized return raises a veritable sea of red flags, given the lack of a full-time UNHCR presence in Tamil Nadu and the unlikelihood of safe reintegration in Sri Lanka. Certainly what is not needed is to replace the refugee camps in India with more camps in Sri Lanka."

(*On January 22, 1992, the S.S. Akbar docked in Sri Lanka's Trincomalee harbor, carrying 614 Tamil refugees returning from India. These were the first of an estimated 30,000 Tamils who may be repatriated under a new Indo-Sri Lankan agreement reached at the turn of the year. USCR wrote to both governments expressing concerns that the repatriation lacked sufficient international safeguards to be deemed either voluntary or safe.*)

Syria

The 289,923 Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA in Syria tend to keep a lower profile than their counterparts in other areas of the UNRWA mandate. Only about 30 percent of the refugees reside in 10 camps, which have the appearance of Palestinian quarters, not clearly demarcated from surrounding neighborhoods. Tension heightened in the Palestinian areas during the Gulf War, since the Syrian government backed the allied coalition while the Palestinian leadership outside Syria threw its support to Saddam Hussein, who presented himself as a champion of the Palestinian cause. Syria also was consolidating its power in Lebanon, which meant the disarming not only of Lebanese militias, but of the armed Palestinian groups there as well (see Lebanon report).

But, with the end of the war, as Syrian interest heightened in Arab-Israeli peace talks, President Hafez Assad moved to mend fences with Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), after an eight-year feud. In October 1991, Assad met Arafat in Damascus, and, in November, the Syrians released hundreds of Palestinian prisoners aligned with Fatah, Arafat's faction within the PLO.

About 4,000 Iraqi refugees, many of whom are Christian, were living in Syria at year's end.

UN Member States: Signatories and Non-Signatories to the UN Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees

Below are governments that belong to the United Nations, listed according to whether or not they have signed the 1951 UN Convention and/or the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, as of February 1992.

Signatories

- Algeria
- Angola
- Argentina
- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bolivia
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cameroon
- Canada (P)
- Cape Verde (P)
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Congo
- Costa Rica
- Cyprus
- Czech and Slovak Federal Rep.
- Denmark
- Djibouti
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equitorial Guinea
- Ethiopia
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- Gabon
- Gambia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Greece
- Guatemala
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Haiti
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Iran
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Ivory Coast
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Liechtenstein
- Luxembourg
- Madagascar (C)
- Malawi
- Mali
- Malta
- Mauritania
- Morocco
- Mozambique (C)
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Norway
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Rwanda
- Samoa (C)
- ~~Sao Tome and Principe~~
- Senegal
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- Spain
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Swaziland (P)
- Sweden
- Tanzania
- Togo
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Uganda
- United Kingdom
- United States (P)
- Uruguay
- Venezuela (P)
- Yemen
- Yugoslavia
- Zaire
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

Non-Signatories

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Bhutan
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Burma (Myanmar)
- Cambodia
- Comoros
- Cuba
- Dem. People's Republic of Korea
- Dominica
- Estonia
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Honduras
- India
- Indonesia
- Iraq
- Jordan
- Kuwait
- Laos
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Libya
- Lithuania
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Marshall Islands
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Mongolia
- Namibia
- Nepal
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Qatar
- Republic of Korea
- Russian Federation
- St. Kitts & Nevis
- St. Lucia
- Saudi Arabia
- Singapore
- Solomon Islands
- South Africa
- Sri Lanka
- Syria
- Thailand
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Ukraine
- St. Vincent and the Grenades
- United Arab Emirates
- Vanuatu
- Vietnam

(C) Signatories to the Convention only (P) Signatories to the Protocol only

NOTE: Although not UN members, the following countries have also signed the UN Convention: Holy See, Monaco, Switzerland, Tuvalu.

NORTH AMERICA

Canada

Canada remained perhaps the most receptive western industrial country to asylum seekers in 1991 with about two-thirds of asylum applicants being granted refugee status. However, a significant backlog has plagued Canada's asylum adjudication system from the inception of a new procedure in 1989. Although the government made some progress in acting on the backlog during 1991, by the time it reached its target date for completing the backlog, September 1991, 40 percent—more than 36,000 cases—had not been acted upon, and about half of the cases that had been decided had yet to be finalized.

Canada's asylum procedure involves two steps. An initial hearing determines the applicant's credibility and eligibility for consideration of refugee status. In 1991, 94 percent of cases decided at the first hearing were permitted to submit their claims for a full hearing. The main thrust at the preliminary hearing is to determine whether the claim has a "credible basis" and whether the applicant is deemed eligible to apply for asylum.

An adjudicator from the Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) and a member of the Immigration and Refugee Board's Convention Refugee Determination Division (CRDD) must both agree that a claim has no credible basis in order for it to be rejected. Credibility is based largely on the applicant's country of origin and its human rights record. From major source countries such as China, El Salvador, Iran, Lebanon, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and the USSR, more than 97 percent of the cases were found to be credible and referred to the full hearing.

In addition to credibility, the first stage also assesses eligibility. An applicant could be ruled ineligible for having been resettled in a third country, being a criminal, or being a security threat. When the law first came into effect, many believed that the eligibility criteria would prevent many if not most from reaching a full hearing on the merits of the asylum claim. In part, this was because applicants who had resided in "safe third countries" were to be deemed ineligible. However, the government has not been able to decide what constitutes a "safe" country. In 1991, only 53 claims, less than two percent, were rejected as ineligible.

In December 1991, a proposal was submitted to the Canadian cabinet to abolish the first stage credibility hearing. By year's end, no further action had been taken on the proposal.

At the second stage, a full hearing on the refugee claim itself is held before two-member panels of the CRDD. A positive decision by one member of the panel is sufficient to grant refugee status. Cases can only be appealed to the federal courts on questions of law, not on the merits of the claim.

Approval rates at the final hearing have declined from 88 percent in 1989, the first year of the new system, to 77 percent in 1990, and 72 percent in 1991. Perhaps indicative of this downward trend, the acceptance rate declined during each quarter of the year, from 79 percent in the first quarter, to 74 in the second, 62 percent in the third, and 59 percent in the fourth.

The most remarkable of the downward trends was the rejection of claims from China. In 1989, 74 percent of Chinese claims were granted. This percentage dipped to 43 percent in 1990, and fell to 21.6 percent in 1991. Only Somalis and Sri Lankans had more claims heard in 1990 than Chinese at the full hearings. Increasing numbers of applications from the Soviet Union were filed during the year. A total of 30,500 asylum applications were filed in 1991 for all nationalities.

Before the new asylum system went into effect, Canada was already saddled with a backlog of 95,000 claims filed before 1989. In the first year of the new system, the government placed a priority on deciding new cases. September 1991 was set as the target date for completing the backlogged cases. These cases were to be decided on the basis of a "credible basis" test only, not the more difficult standard of a "well-founded fear of persecution." Also, in an attempt to streamline the process, paper screening was used to determine sufficiently strong cases that would not require an oral hearing. Through August 1991, 11,200 cases were found to be credible, and another 3,100 were accepted on humanitarian grounds through the paper screening procedure. At the oral hearings, 13,100 claims were found to be credible out of the more than 20,200.

By the end of August 1991, 58,366, or 61 percent, of the backlog cases had been acted upon, of whom 29,500 cases, about half of the decided cases, or 31 percent of the total caseload, had been finalized. The remaining cases were still pending medical or background checks, arrangements for removal, or confirmation of departure. Of the cases decided, nearly 40,000, or 65 percent, were accepted, and 16,163 were in the removal stream, or had already left Canada, although only 661 had actually been deported, through August 1991.

In late 1990, the Canadian Inter-Church Committee for Refugees submitted a report to the UN Human Rights Committee, indicating that many refugees were showing signs of distress as a result of long delays in the refugee backlog process, and consequent separation from families. It called the long delays "a form of cruel treatment." In February 1991, the Canadian Minister of Employment and Immigration wrote to the ICCR saying that special procedures had been instituted for priority processing abroad of dependents of backlog claimants in life-threatening or abusive situations, and that the claimants, in turn, who were experiencing severe emotional trauma caused by separation of close family members, could make a submission for priority processing.

There was a dip in the number of refugees resettled into Canada from overseas in 1991. Although the government resettled 7,262 refugees in 1991, this fell far short of the 13,000 that the government had anticipated resettling during the year. The shortfall was explained in part by fewer referrals from UNHCR of African cases and political reforms in Eastern Europe. In June, the government announced that 2,000 "Refugee Class" places would be shifted to "Family Class" in order to reunite families of refugees already resettled in Canada. Fewer privately sponsored refugees also

Haitian asylum seekers being held at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Chester Higgins/NYT

were admitted than anticipated. The 17,012 privately sponsored refugees for 1991 fell short of the 23,500 that had been expected to be resettled during the year.

United States

1991 was a year of significant restructuring in the way the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) adjudicates asylum cases. Starting in April, a specialized corps of asylum officers, supervised by the INS central office and supported by a documentation center, took over from local INS district directors the responsibility for initial hearings of asylum claims by persons voluntarily coming forward to seek asylum.

INS district directors had been criticized for harboring an immigration enforcement bias when hearing asylum claims, and for giving undue deference to opinion letters from the State Department that were said to inject a foreign policy bias as well. From March 1983 through March 1991, asylum approval rates under INS district directors averaged 23.6 percent. Highest approval rates were accorded to asylum seekers from the Soviet Union (74.5 percent), China (69 percent), Romania (62.6 percent), and Iran (61 percent). Among the lowest asylum approval rates were Sri Lankans (6.7 percent), Salvadorans (2.8 percent), Guatemalans (2 percent), and Haitians (1.8 percent).

Statistics were not available by year's end for the approval rate under the new asylum officers corps, but asylum practitioners noted a marked improvement in the training, knowledge, and attitudes of asylum officers. However, a growing backlog of pending cases was raising concern. The number of cases adjudicated in the first half of the fiscal year, during the transition period to the new system, 5,418, was about one-third the number of cases decided for the same time period in 1990, 14,405. In all, about 62,000 new asylum applications were filed in 1991. The backlog of cases grew from 77,239 in March 1990 to 114,044 in March 1991. By year's end, unofficial estimates of the backlog were 177,000. Inadequate staffing for the asylum corps and the limited resources supporting the documentation center raised concerns that the backlog would continue to grow.

Despite the positive developments of the year—the new asylum corps and a new legal safety net called "temporary protected status" (TPS) that brought Salvadorans out of the shadows under its protective nondeportation umbrella—the defining event of 1991 was the Bush Administration decision in November to forcibly repatriate Haitian boat people fleeing Haiti in the aftermath of President Jean Bertrand Aristide's ouster. The exodus began on October 28 with a boatload of 19 persons. By November 25, the number of interdicted Haitians had grown to 4,530. Because of deteriorating conditions in Haiti, the U.S. government initially held off forcibly returning them. But as the numbers of asylum seekers increased, and the Coast Guard cutters plying the waters between Haiti and the United States began to fill with them, the Coast Guard was ordered to return two boatloads totaling 538 people back to Port-au-Prince, on November 18 and 19.

Within hours of the second Coast Guard cutter offloading the Haitians at Port-au-Prince, a federal judge in Miami issued a temporary restraining order preventing further forced repatriations. For the rest of the year, the government halted further involuntary returns as the matter was debated in the courts.

In the meantime, interdicted Haitians were brought to the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, where INS asylum officers began screening them to see if they had a credible basis for their asylum claims. By year's end, 391 of the Haitians had been brought to the United States to pursue asylum claims, representing about 15 percent of those given screening interviews. Out of a total of 8,377 Haitians interdicted, 6,780 remained at Guantánamo. Nearly 500 voluntarily repatriated, and others had been moved to Venezuela and Honduras.

Many nongovernmental organizations supported legislation in Congress that would have designated Haitian nationals for TPS, the new category of law created by the Immigration Act of 1990 that bars the United States from deporting protected nationals for a set period of time, and authorizes them to work during that time.

During the course of 1991, the Attorney General designated TPS for nationals of Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, and Somalia. Congress also mandated that TPS apply to Salvadorans in the language of the Immigration Act itself. On several occasions in 1991, USCR contacted the Attorney General to recommend ways to make registration more efficient and cost-effective, as well as to urge that TPS apply to other vulnerable groups, such as Haitians, Palestinians in Lebanon and Kuwait, and nationals of Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, and Sudan.

Throughout 1991, private groups embarked on major efforts to register Salvadorans for TPS. By the close of the registration period, nearly 190,000 Salvadorans had registered. The fees associated with registration and the difficulty in obtaining fee waivers remained points of controversy in the Salvadoran TPS registration effort.

The overseas refugee resettlement program brought 111,020 refugees to the United States during 1991. Vietnamese admissions of 44,179 and Soviet admissions of 38,661 represented about three-quarters of the total. The State Department stopped taking applications for refugee resettlement from both Afghan and Ethiopian refugees in 1991. Since 1980, the United States had admitted 24,344 Afghans and 23,610 Ethiopians as refugees, making these two nationalities among the top three countries in Africa and the Middle East/South Asia producing refugees resettled in the United States.

Closing the resettlement door to Afghans and Ethiopians was motivated by political developments in those countries as well as a renewed emphasis on voluntary repatriation as an option the U.S. government wanted to promote as a solution to several longstanding refugee situations, particularly in Asia, Africa, and Central America.

On the domestic side, support for U.S. resettlement was squeezed by budgetary considerations. In June, the U.S. House of Representatives cut refugee cash and medical assistance by half in its FY 92 appropriation bill, eliminating $117 million from the Administration's $410 million request. In October, the U.S. Senate restored the $410 million appropriation, but said that the $117 million for refugee cash and medical assistance would not be available until the final day of the 1992 fiscal year, raising concerns on the part of some state and local governments about long delays in reimbursement as well as legal questions of advancing state funds for federal programs.

In October, when President Bush announced a refugee admissions ceiling of 142,000 for FY 92—a 29,000 increase over 1991—the Administration provided no additional funding request for the domestic resettlement program. State and local governments protested what they called an abdication of federal responsibility. Starting on October 1, federal reimbursement for refugee cash and medical assistance was cut back from a maximum of twelve months to eight months for newly arriving refugees who were not eligible for the "categorical" assistance programs, AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) and SSI (Supplemental Security Income).

Selected Sources

In addition to first-hand assessments, information gathered from other on-the-ground sources, and from responses to USCR inquiries by governments, *Survey* statistics and country reports also draw from the following sources:

Africa Confidential. London.
Africa News. Durham, N.C.
Amnesty International publications. London.
Center for Immigration Policy and Refugee Assistance publications. Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.
Central America Newspak. Central America Resource Center. Austin, Texas.
Christian Science Monitor. Boston.
Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1991. U.S. Department of State. Washington, D.C.
Daily Report. Foreign Broadcast Information Service. U.S. Government. Washington, D.C.
Ecumenical Refugee Network News. World Council of Churches, Geneva.
Far Eastern Economic Review. Hong Kong.
Horn of Africa Bulletin. Life and Peace Institute. Uppsala, Sweden.
Human Rights Update. Palestine Human Rights Information Center. Jerusalem/Chicago.
Human Rights Watch publications. N.Y.
Indian Ocean Newsletter. Paris.
Indochina Resource Action Center publications. Washington, D.C.
International Committee of the Red Cross publications. Geneva.
Lawyers Committee for Human Rights publications. N.Y.
Migration News Sheet. Brussels.
New African. London.
New York Times. N.Y.
Refugee Policy Group publications. Washington, D.C.
Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: 1 July 1989–30 June 1990. General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/4 5/13). United Nations. N.Y.
Report of ECRE Biannual Participants Meeting: October 5–6, 1991. European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles. Geneva.
Report on Food Emergencies. World Food Program. N.Y.
Situation Reports. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, AID Office, U.S. Department of State. Washington, D.C.
Situation Reports. Special Emergency Program for the Horn of Africa. United Nations. N.Y.
UNHCR Activities Financed by Voluntary Funds: Report for 1990–91 and Proposed Programmes and Budget for 1992. General Assembly, Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme. Forty-second Session, (A/AC.96/774) October 24, 1991. United Nations. N.Y.
UNHCR publications. Geneva.
UNRWA News. Vienna.
Washington Post. Washington, D.C.
World Refugee Report. Bureau for Refugee Programs, U.S. Department of State. September 1990. Washington, D.C.

DIRECTORY OF ORGANIZATIONS

The following are selected international, governmental, and private organizations providing information about or assistance for refugees. Descriptions are generally provided by the agencies themselves.

International Organizations

Centre for Documentation on Refugees (CDR). 5–7 av. de la Paix. 202 Geneva. Switzerland. (022) 739 81 11. FAX: (022) 731 95 46. E-mail address: THOOLEN @ UNICC.

Computer-based documentation center that gathers, stores, and disseminates information on all aspects of refugee protection, reception, resettlement, and integration. Part of UNHCR, but also serves outside users. Reading room and computer files available through staff. Publisher of quarterly *REFUGEE ABSTRACTS* and ad hoc bibliographies. CDR also houses the coordinating unit of the International Refugee Documentation Network (IRDN).

European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE). Bondway House, 3–9 Bondway, London S.W.8., U.K. Telephone (071) 582-9928. General Secretary: Philip Rudge.

International forum for 60 West European nongovernmental organizations that assist refugees or are concerned with refugee and asylum policy. Monitors national and international developments, promotes legal and information networks, and advocates progressive standards for the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers. The European Legal Network on Asylum (ELENA), a forum for legal counsellors, is a project activity of ECRE.

International Organization for Migration (IOM, formerly ICM). 17, route des Morillons, P.O. Box 71, CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland. (022) 717-9111 FAX: (022) 798-6150. Director General: James N. Purcell, Jr. New York—Richard Scott, Room 717, 1123 Broadway, New York, NY 10010. Washington—Frances Sullivan (Acting), 1750 K Street, NW, Suite 1110, Washington, DC 20006. (202) 862-1826.

Established in 1951 to arrange resettlement processing and transportation for refugees and migrants. Conducts related programs for medical screenings, language training, and cultural orientation. Plans and implements programs for the transfer of specialized human resources through migration to developing countries. Undertakes research projects and organizes international seminars on major migration themes. Represented in 48 countries worldwide.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). 19 avenue de la Paix, CH-1202 Geneva, Switzerland. (022) 734 60 01. FAX: (022) 733 20 57 Telex: 414 226. Delegations in 47 countries. In the U.S., 780 Third Avenue, 28th Floor, New York, NY 10017. (212) 371-0770. FAX: (212) 838-5397. President: Cornelio Sommaruga.

Founder of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Promotes international humanitarian law. A Swiss, independent, neutral organization with the internationally recognized role of humanitarian intermediary between belligerants during armed conflicts. Protects and assists the victims of international and civil wars and of internal disturbances and tensions by providing medical aid, relief supplies, a tracing and information agency for prisoners of war and missing persons, a service for transmission of family messages, and visits to civilian internees and prisoners of war and political detainees. Has observer status to the UN General Assembly.

International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA). 13 Rue Gautier, 1201 Geneva, Switzerland. Postal Address: C.P. 216, 1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland. (41–22) 732 66 00. Cable: VOLAG (Geneva). Telex: 412 586 ICVA-CH. FAX: (41–22) 738 99 04. Executive Director: Delmar Blasco.

Founded in 1962 to provide a forum for voluntary agencies active in the fields of humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. At present, has 87 members comprising international and national voluntary agencies.

Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. 17 chemin des Crets, P.O. Box 372, CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland. (022) 734 55 80. FAX: (022) 733 03 95. Telex 22555 LRCS-CH. Secretary-General: Par Stenback.

The League, the international federation of 149 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, contributes to the humanitarian activities of National Societies, coordinates relief operations for natural disaster victims, cares for refugees outside areas of conflict, and aims to promote peace in the world. In refugee situations, the Secretariat mobilizes the League's own financial and in-kind contributions and health and managerial staff to supplement National Societies' and UNHCR's resources.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Case Postale 2500, CH-1211 Geneva 2 Depot, Switzerland. (022) 739 81 11. High Commissioner: Sadako Ogata. UNHCR Liaison Office to the United Nations Headquarters, UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017. (212) 963-6200. UNHCR Branch Office for the United States, 1718 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009. (202) 387-8546.

Established in 1951 to provide international protection to refugees who fall within the scope of its statute and to seek durable solutions for the problems of refugees. Also coordinates assistance programs for displaced persons in accordance with various subsequent General Assembly resolutions. Representation in over 100 countries.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). 3 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017. (212) 326-7000. Executive Director: James Grant.

Established in 1946 to assist children of war-devastated Europe. Since the early 1950s, the organization's mandate was enlarged to address the problems of children in the developing world. It provides child assistance programs involving nutrition, primary health care, water and sanitation, and education. Provides humanitarian assistance to emergency victims of natural and man-made disasters.

United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO). Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 100, Switzerland. (022) 734 60 11 or 733 20 10. Telex: 414242 DRO CH. FAX: (4122) 733 56 23.

Created in December 1971 to provide a single central office within the UN system to mobilize and coordinate international relief assistance in case of a disaster, as well as to promote preparedness and prevention of natural disasters. Coordinates UN assistance with that given by intergovernmental and private agencies.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Vienna International Centre, PO Box 700, A-1400 Vienna, Austria. (011) 431 21131, Ext. 4530. Commissioner-General: Ilter Turkmen. New York Liaison Office: William Lee, UN Bldg., Rm. DC2-0550, New York, NY 10017. (212) 963-2255.

Since 1950, has provided assistance to registered Palestinian refugees, now numbering more than two and a half million, in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Offers basic health and relief services to eligible refugees, and education to children, as well as vocational and teacher training. Also provides emergency services to Palestine refugees displaced by war and violence, as it has been doing continuously since 1975 in Lebanon. Has provided additional emergency aid to refugees in the West Bank and Gaza Strip where the Palestinian uprising broke out in December 1987.

World Council of Churches, Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee & World Service. P.O. Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland. (022) 791 61 11. FAX: (022) 791 03 61. Telex: 415 730 OIK CH. Coordinator: Melaku Kifle.

Works with local churches in about 70 countries in support of their refugee service, including both emergency and long-term assistance. Also, in cooperation with local churches, advocates on behalf of refugees; provides resettlement services; public information and training; and facilitates meetings between churches on refugee issues.

World Food Program (WFP). Via Cristoforo Colombo 426, 00145 Rome, Italy. Executive Director: James C. Ingram. 06–57971. Telex: 626675 WFP I. Liaison Office at UN Headquarters. (212) 963-8364.

The food aid arm of the United Nations system, with offices in 80 developing countries, provides both long-term development assistance and emergency aid. A major share of the Program's resources is channelled to protracted and emergency refugee and displaced persons feeding operations, in close cooperation with UNHCR. Coordinates food aid deliveries and assists bilateral donors with procurement and transport of food; helps developing countries with logistics problems in food emergency situations.

U.S. Government Offices

Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Refugee Resettlement, Administration for Children and Families, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW, 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20447. (202) 401-9246. Director: Chris Gersten.

Assists refugees in achieving economic self-sufficiency following their arrival in the United States. Assistance primarily provided through state-administered resettlement programs. Reimburses states for costs incurred in providing refugee cash and medical assistance to newly arrived refugees in need. Provides social service grants to states primarily for making available English language and employment training services to refugees.

Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, 425 Eye St. NW, Washington, DC 20536. (202) 514-2000. Commissioner: Gene McNary.

Administers immigration and naturalization laws relating to the admission, exclusion, deportation, and naturalization of aliens, including refugees and asylees.

Department of Justice, Office of Asylum Policy and Review, Room 6217, 10th and Constitution, NW, Washington, DC 20530. (202) 514-2415. Director: Jan C. Ting.

Advises the Attorney General on U.S. asylum policy and other immigration-related issues.

Department of State, Bureau for Refugee Programs, Room 5824, 2201 C St. NW, Washington, DC 20520. (202) 647-5822. Director: Princeton N. Lyman.

Formulates, implements, and directs U.S. refugee and migration policies and programs. The basic mission comprises international refugee protection and assistance as well as management of the U.S. admissions program.

Department of State, Office of the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs, (S/R) Rm. 6333, 2201 C St. NW, Washington, DC 20520. (202) 647-3964. Ambassador-at-Large and U.S. Coordinator for Refugees: Jewel S. Lafontant-Mankarious.

Coordinates the development and implementation of the international and domestic refugee policies of the U.S. government.

House Judiciary Committee, 2138 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515. (202) 225-3951. Chairman: Jack Brooks; Subcommittee on International Law, Immigration, and Refugees. Chairman: Romano L. Mazzoli.

Legislative and oversight responsibility for immigration and naturalization, citizenship, refugees, international law (including but not limited to treaties and international agreements, comity between nations) and other appropriate matters.

Senate Judiciary Committee, 224 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20510. (202) 224-5225. Chairman: Joseph Biden; Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Policy, 518 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20510. (202) 224-7878. Chairman: Edward M. Kennedy.

Studies and makes recommendations on the problems of refugees; has jurisdiction over immigration and naturalization legislation.

Private Organizations

Following are selected U.S. voluntary agencies and human rights and educational organizations that participate in programs to resettle refugees, and/or provide assistance to or information about refugees. Readers may contact U.S. resettlement agencies (indicated by *) for information on sponsorship.

Africare, Inc., 440 R St. NW, Washington, DC 20001. (202) 462-3164. Executive Director: C. Payne Lucas.

Dedicated to improving the quality of life in rural Africa through the development of water resources, increased food production, health services, and refugee assistance. Currently operates more than 220 programs in Africa and many development education programs in the United States. Refugee programs currently in East, Southern, and Francophone Africa.

***American Council for Nationalities Service,** 95 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. (212) 532-5858. Executive Director: Wells C. Klein.

Non-sectarian organization with 73 year history of service to refugees, immigrants and others in migration. Forty community-based affiliates located throughout the U.S. provide refugee resettlement, immigration counseling, and other supportive services meant to ease the burden of transition both for the newcomers and the communities receiving them. Agencies provide asylum representation and advocate on behalf of the rights of immigrants and refugees. International Social Services/American Branch, providing intercountry casework services to families and children around the world, is a program of ACNS. The U.S. Committee for Refugees is the public information arm of ACNS.

American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102. (215) 241-7000. FAX: (215) 241-7026. Executive Secretary: Asia Bennett.

Quaker organization founded in 1917, supports reconciliation and development worldwide, especially in situations of conflict; provides relief and rehabilitation assistance to refugees in the context of community development; advocates for resolution of conflicts and for refugee rights in the United States.

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc., 711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 687-6200. Executive Vice President: Michael Schneider.

Established in 1914 and funded predominantly by the campaigns of the UJA, JDC serves as the overseas arm of the organized American Jewish community, providing for rescue, relief, and rehabilitation of Jewish communities around the world. Current programs in 35 countries include Soviet Jewish emigres, Israel's social needs, glasnost-facilitated expansions in Eastern Europe and the former USSR, and nonsectarian development and disaster relief worldwide.

American Jewish Philanthropic Fund, 386 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016. (212) 679-0010. President: Charles J. Tanenbaum.

Provides relief, resettlement, and retraining services to Jewish refugees in Europe and the U.S. through programs administered by the International Rescue Committee.

American Red Cross, 17th & D Sts. NW, Washington, DC 20006. (202) 639-3306. Chairman: George F. Moody. International Social Services Division Director: Mary-Lou McCutcheon (202) 639-3308.

Works in cooperation with 150 Red Cross/Red Crescent and Magen David Adom of Israel and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Assists refugees in locating missing family members through its tracing and social services. Other Red Cross programs include international disaster preparedness and relief, and development of other national societies.

American Refugee Committee (ARC), Headquarters: 2344 Nicollet Ave., Suite 350, Minneapolis, MN 55404. (612) 872-7060. Chicago Office: 317 Howard St., Evanston, IL 60202. President: W.D. Conley.

Internationally, ARC provides medical volunteers for refugee camps in Thailand, Cambodia, and Malawi (Africa) to provide direct care, medical training, and child survivial programs. The Illinois program focuses on public/mental health training and English language/citizenship training.

Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 8DJ, United Kingdom. Secretary General: Ian Martin. U.S. Section: 322 8th Ave., New York, NY 10001. Executive Director: John G. Healey. Address requests for assistance to: Refugee Office, 655 Sutter Street, Suite 402, San Francisco, CA 94102. (415) 776-2473.

A worldwide independent movement. Its main focus is to free all prisoners of conscience; ensure fair and prompt trials for political prisoners; abolish the death penalty, torture and other cruel treatment of prisoners; end extrajudicial executions and "disappearances." Also opposes abuses by opposition groups: hostage taking, torture, and killings of prisoners and other arbitrary killings. It provides information for asylum applications and opposes forcible return of people who risk imprisonment as prisoners of conscience, torture, "disappearance," or execution. Publishes annual report, monthly newsletter, and country reports on human rights conditions worldwide.

Boat People S.O.S. Inc., P.O. Box 2652, Merrifield, VA 22116. Tel. and FAX: (703) 522-9264. Executive Director: Dr. Thang Nguyen. Chairperson: Truong Anh Thuy.

A private, nonprofit organization providing free legal counseling and assistance to the Vietnamese asylum seekers in Southeast Asian refugee camps. Cooperates with other Vietnamese organizations in the free world to seek foster parents and homes for unaccompanied minors. Publishes monthly the *Boat People S.O.S. News Bulletin*.

CARE, 660 First Ave., New York, NY 10016. (212) 686-3110. President: Dr. Philip Johnston.

An international aid and self-help development organization. Responds to the needs of refugees and displaced persons in emergency situations through effective delivery systems to facilitate the distribution of food and other aid. Also implements long-term development programs in health and nutrition education and natural resource management to improve living conditions and facilitate self-sufficiency among refugees, displaced persons and repatriates. Has refugee programs in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Thailand and programs for the displaced in Angola, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Iraq, Laos, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Sudan.

Catholic Relief Services—USCC (CRS), 209 West Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD 21201. Executive Director: Lawrence A. Pezzullo.

Overseas relief and development agency of the U.S. Catholic community. Active in 66 countries with nutrition programs, water and agricultural projects, small enterprise development, and community promotion. Major refugee foci are Africa and Central America. Refugee and resettlement assistance in 1990 was valued at $5 million, or 2 percent of the CRS program expenditure.

Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St., NW, Washington, DC 20037. (202) 429-9292. President: G. Richard Tucker.

Operates the Refugee Service Center in Washington, DC under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. State Department. Acts as a liaison between the State Department-funded Overseas Refugee Training Program sites in Southeast Asia and educators, social service providers, and others assisting refugees in the U.S. Produces resettlement guides for newly arrived refugees, conducts surveys to gather information on refugees' resettlement experiences, gives presentations and workshops in U.S. resettlement sites and at professional conferences, and publishes information material for staff in the Overseas Refugee Training Program.

Center for Migration Studies (CMS), 209 Flagg Place, Staten Island, NY 10304-1199. (718) 351-8800. FAX: (718) 667-4598. Executive Director: Lydio F. Tomasi.

Founded in 1964, CMS encourages the interdisciplinary study of human migration and refugee movements everywhere through scientific research projects; publication of the quarterly *International Migration Review* and the bimonthly *Migration World Magazine*, as well as books, papers, and the *CMS Newsletter*, the CMS Annual National Legal Conference on Immigration and Refugee Policy in Washington, DC; other occasional national and international conferences on migration and refugees; and a specialized library and archives on migration and refugees.

Central America Resource Center, Refugee Legal Support Service, Box 2327, Austin, Texas 78768, (512) 476-9841. Director: Jill Gronquist.

Established in 1983, provides political asylum documentation for refugees from all Central American countries. Information is obtained from an extensive human-rights data base of computer-indexed U.S., Central American, and international human-rights reports, newsclipping services, and church and government reports. Referrals are made to direct service organizations and to attorneys with comparable cases.

***Church World Service/Immigration and Refugee Program,** 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115. (212) 870-3153. FAX: (212) 870-2132. Director: Dale S. de Haan.

Responds ecumenically, as part of the National Council of Churches, to the plight of refugees, migrants, displaced persons, immigrants, and persons seeking asylum and safe haven. Through its network of 45 affiliate offices nationwide in cooperation with participating denominations, resettles refugees from around the world, assists immigrants and provides first asylum services in the U.S. Supports and participates in the development of national and international policies and programs advocating protection for the uprooted. Works with ecumenical organizations worldwide, including the World Council of Churches.

Cultural Survival, Inc., 53A Church Street, Cambridge, MA 02138. (617) 495-2562. Executive Director: Pam Solo.

Advocates the rights of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities. Supports programs on five continents, as well as direct assistance projects designed and run by indigenous peoples; conducts research and produces publications dealing with the vital issues confronting these populations; and advocates on their behalf along with outreach to inform the general public.

Direct Relief International, 27 La Patera Lane, P.O. Box 30820, Santa Barbara, CA 93130. (805) 464-4767. President: Ann W. Carlos.

Receives and donates contributions of pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, and equipment to assist needy health facilities in medically less developed areas of the world, as well as refugees and other victims of natural disaster and civil strife.

***Episcopal Migration Ministries** (formerly The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief/Refugee Migration Affairs) 815 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017. (212) 687-9454. Executive Director: Rev. Canon Burgess Carr.

Official channel through which the Episcopal Church responds to relief and development needs of refugees, migrants, displaced persons, and asylum seekers globally. Resettles refugees and assists immigrants and asylum seekers in the U.S. through 98 Episcopal dioceses. Assists refugees worldwide in concert with the Anglican Communion and partner agencies, in cooperation with the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. Advocates for legislation to respond to the protection and resettlement needs of refugees and displaced persons.

Eritrean Relief Committee, Inc., 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 907, New York, NY 10115. (212) 870-2727. Executive Director: Tesfa A. Seyoum.

Founded in 1976, aids Eritreans affected by war, drought, and famine, including people displaced internally and refugees in the Sudan. U.S. partner agency of the indigenous Eritrean Relief Association (ERA), which focuses on self-help and grassroots initiatives. Emergency assistance includes food, medicine, shelter, and pest control. Development support includes an agricultural rehabilitation program, rural health care facilities, and vocational and academic education projects.

***The Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc.** 3213 Columbia Pike, Suite 101, Arlington, Virginia 22204. (703) 685-0510. Director: Tsehaye Teferra.

A private, nonprofit organization established in 1983. Engages in programs that promote the economic, educational, and social development of the Ethiopian community in the U.S. Provides Ethiopians and other refugees with the means to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to become self-sufficient, and to disseminate information concerning Ethiopia and the Ethiopian community in the United States. Operates a resettlement program.

Exodus World Service, P.O. Box 7000, West Chicago, IL 60186-7000. (312) 733-8433. Executive Director: Dennis Ripley.

An international humanitarian agency that provides educational services to individuals and churches to heighten their knowledge and awareness of refugees. Works through media and volunteer networks to gain material and service assistance from the private sector for refugee families resettling in the United States.

The Experiment in International Living (EIL), Projects in International Development and Training Division, 1015 15th Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20005. (202) 408-5420. Vice President: Anthony Schwarzwalder.

In a consortium with Save the Children Federation and World Education, offers English as a Second Language (ESL), cultural orientation, work orientation, preparation for American secondary schools and native language literacy for Indochinese adults and families in Phanat Nikhom, Thailand. In a consortium with Save the Children Federation, offers elementary, secondary and vocational education, literacy and limited ESL to Indochinese refugees and asylum seekers in Galang, Indonesia. In Pakistan, assists Afghan refugees in income generation and education.

Georgetown University Center for Immigration Policy and Refugee Assistance (CIPRA), P.O. Box 2298, Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057. (202) 298-0200. Director: Rev. Francis Gillespie, S.J.

Provides research, training and consultation to contribute to the development of humane, reasonable and enforceable immigration and refugee policies. Sponsors lectures, seminars, public meetings on refugee policy; and educational programs offering internships in refugee assistance and medicine, dental care, and nursing, small business training and leadership development. Tutorial program offers community service to refugees in local school systems. Conducts research on migration in the Americas and U.S. immigration legislation and its effects.

Grassroots International, P.O. Box 312, Cambridge, MA 02139. (617) 497-9180.

Provides humanitarian assistance to Third World peoples and social movements as a basis for building awareness and activism among North Americans in support of equity, justice, and peace. Sends funds and material aid to local partner organizations linked to broad-based movements for change in crisis areas—currently South Africa, the Philippines, the Horn of Africa, and the Middle East. All projects supported are community-based with emphasis on community organizing and empowerment.

***Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Inc. (HIAS),** 333 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001-5004. Acting Executive Director, Dail Stolow.

The refugee and migration agency of the organized American Jewish community. Assists Jewish refugees and migrants from the USSR, Eastern Europe, the Near East, North Africa, and elsewhere; in the last decade alone, HIAS has helped more than 200,000 Soviet Jewish refugees immigrate to the U.S. Also assists Indochinese, Ethiopian, Afghan, and other non-Jewish refugees through programs in cooperation with the U.S. government. Global network of offices, country representatives, and affiliated organizations in 45 countries on six continents.

Human Rights Internet, c/o Human Rights Centre, University of Ottawa, 57 Louis Pasteur, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 6N5, Canada. (613) 564-3492. FAX: (613) 564-4054. Executive Director: Laurie S. Wiseberg.

An international communications network and clearinghouse serving the information needs of the human rights community: scholars, activists, and policymakers concerned with the promotion and protection of internationally recognized human rights. Publishes *Human Rights Internet Reporter*, a comprehensive reference work on humanitarian activity worldwide. Publishes directories describing the work of human rights organizations worldwide.

Human Rights Watch, 485 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 972-8400. FAX: (212) 972-0905. Executive Director: Aryeh Neier. Washington, D.C. office: 1522 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005. Director: Hollly Burkhalter. (202) 371-6592.

U.S. human rights organization that monitors the human rights practices of governments. Composed of five regional divisions—Africa Watch, Americas Watch, Asia Watch, Helsinki Watch, and Middle East Watch—plus the Fund for Free Expression.

Indochina Resource Action Center (IRAC), 1628 16th St., NW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20009. (202) 667-4690. FAX: (202) 667-6449. Executive Director: Le Xuan Khoa.

Assists Southeast Asians in the U.S. to make the transition from the status of refugees to a productive Asian-American minority. Major activities include public education and advocacy, leadership and citizenship development, capacity-building for Indochinese self-help organizations, and economic development.

InterAction (American Council for Voluntary International Action), 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, 8th Floor, Washington, DC 20036. (202) 667-8227. President and CEO: Peter J. Davies. Program Officer, Refugee Affairs: Timothy M. McCully.

A broadly based membership association of 120 U.S. private and voluntary organizations working in international development, humanitarian and emergency relief, refugee relief, assistance, and resettlement, public policy and federal relations, and development education. Member agencies participate in any or all of six working committees: Development Assistance, Migration and Refugee Affairs, Disaster Response and Resources, Public Policy, Development Education, and Private Funding.

International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), 37–39 rue de Vermont, Case postale 96, CH-1211 Geneva 20 CIC, Switzerland. (022) 733-4150. Secretary General: Dr. Andre Van Chau. President: Mr. Edward De Brandt. In the U.S., 1319 F St. NW, Suite 820, Washington, DC 20004. Links Catholic assistance agencies in both first asylum and refugee resettlement countries, providing logistical and sometimes financial support for their emigration processing activities. Since 1951, has administered a series of travel loan funds for refugees and migrants. Acts as Joint Voluntary Agency Representative in six countries. Administers the U.S. component of the Orderly Departure Program. Promotes local settlement activities through project assistance and training of refugee officers.

***International Rescue Committee,** 386 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016. (212) 679-0010. Executive Director: Robert P. DeVecchi.

Nonsectarian voluntary agency founded in 1933. Provides resettlement services to refugees from Indochina, the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Cuba, Central America, Afghanistan, Iran, Ethiopia, and other countries. Maintains a domestic resettlement network of 16 offices as well as five European offices. Overseas, provides emergency relief and assistance to refugees and internally displaced victims of civil strife and conflict. Services include medical, public health, education and other related forms of assistance. Programs are presently operating in Thailand, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Sudan, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and El Salvador.

Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 330 Seventh Ave., 10th Floor North, New York, NY 10001. (212) 629-6170. Executive Director: Michael Posner. Director: Refugee Project: Arthur Helton. Washington, DC Office: 100 Maryland Avenue, NE, Room 502, Washington, DC 20002. (202) 547-5692. Director of DC office: Joe Eldridge.

Public interest law center in the fields of international human rights and refugee law. Monitors human rights in countries around the world, including those receiving U.S. foreign aid. Works to ensure that persons seeking refuge in the U.S. receive the protections they are guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution and international law. Legal representation is provided by volunteer attorneys for individual asylum applicants who cannot afford counsel.

***Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service,** 390 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016-8803. (212) 532-6350. Executive Director: Ralston Deffenbaugh.

National agency of Lutheran churches in the U.S. for ministry with refugees, asylum seekers, undocumented persons, and immigrants. Founded in 1939 to resettle World War II refugees, now serves in advocacy for protection and humane treatment for uprooted people worldwide as well as in immigration services and resettlement. Works through 26 regional affiliate social service agency offices that support the direct assistance of church and community volunteers; 13 partner agencies to help unaccompanied minor children; more than 40 ecumenical community-based projects to help asylum seekers; and immigration training to assist service providers.

Lutheran World Relief, 390 Park Ave., South, New York, NY 10016. (212) 532-6350. Executive Director: Norman E. Barth.

Serves as the overseas development and relief agency on behalf of most U.S. Lutherans to assist with long-term and emergency help for people, especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Refugee assistance is often channeled through programs of the Lutheran World Federation.

Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501. (717) 859-1151. Canadian Office—134 Plaza Dr., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 5K9. (204) 261-6381. Executive Secretary: John A. Lapp.

Cooperative relief and service agency for Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in North America. Provides material aid and development assistance to refugees from man-made and natural disasters. Current work includes assistance to refugees in the Horn of Africa, Central America, Southeast Asia, and Middle East. Arranges resettlement for refugees in the U.S. and Canada.

***Migration and Refugee Services (MRS),** United States Catholic Conference, 3211 Fourth Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20017-1194. (202) 541-3220. FAX: (202) 541-3399. Executive Director: Rev. Richard Ryscavage, S.J.

One of the public policy and social action agencies of the United States Catholic Conference, MRS carries out Church policy on migration, refugee, and immigration issues. Provides program support and regional coordination for a network of more than 140 diocesan refugee resettlement offices, which resettled over 50,000 refugees in FY 91. Within MRS, the Office for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees provides the pastoral foundation for all of MRS's programs and assists the Bishops in encouraging the integration of immigrants, migrants, and refugees into the life and mission of the local Church. The Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC) was established in 1988 to ensure that all newcomers have access to affordable immigration related services.

Minority Rights Group (International), 379 Brixton Road, Brixton, London SW9 7DE, U.K. (071) 978-9498. Fax: (071) 738-6265.

An independent, international organization that undertakes research, provides information, and develops education programs on minorities. Publishes reports on minority groups worldwide and on thematic issues concerning minority rights. Has a newly established book series *Minority Rights Publications*, convenes conferences of scholars and practitioners, and advocates minority rights at the UN and other international fora. Has affiliates in twenty countries.

National Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Forum, 220 I Street, NE, Suite 220, Washington DC 20002. (202) 544-0004. Director: Frank Sharry.

A national, nonprofit, educational organization with a broad multi-institutional and multi-ethnic membership. Mission is to establish positive working relationships among the diverse communities represented by its membership, and to promote the pro-immigrant, pro-refugee philosophy embodied in its statement of principles.

Operation California/USA, Inc. 7615½ Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90046. (213) 658-8876. FAX: (213) 653-7846. Telex 295252 OPCAUR. President: Richard Walden.

A nonprofit organization founded in 1979. Objectives are to collect and transport high-priority emergency relief supplies to areas of need. Has been active in Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Tibet, Kampuchea, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Ecuador, Mexico, Lebanon, Poland, and the United States.

Oxfam America, 115 Broadway, Boston, MA 02116. (617) 482-1211. Executive Director: Dr. John Hammock.

A nonprofit, international agency that funds self-help development and disaster relief projects in poor countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Also produces and distributes educational materials for people in the United States on issues of hunger and development. One of seven autonomous Oxfams worldwide. Oxfam America was founded in 1970.

Polish-American Immigration and Relief Committee, 140 West 22nd St., New York, NY 10011. (212) 254-2240. Executive Vice President: Janusz Krzyzanowski.

Nonsectarian voluntary agency founded in 1947 to help displaced persons and political refugees. Activities include resettlement, adjustment of status, family reunification, and social services.

Rav Tov, Inc., International Jewish Rescue Organization, 500 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211. (718) 963-1991. Executive Director: David Niederman.

Through its network of overseas offices, provides care and maintenance, medical assistance, visa documentation and pre-migration planning to refugees while in transit. In countries of resettlement, provides a full range of services including reception, housing, medical care, language training, education, employment counseling, and maintenance assistance.

Refugee Policy Group (RPG), 1424 16th St., NW, Suite 401, Washington, DC 20036. (202) 387-3015. Executive Director: Dennis Gallagher.

Serves as an independent center of policy analysis and research on domestic and international refugee issues. Houses a refugee resource library and provides auspices for policy analysts, researchers, and program developers to meet and conduct their work.

Refugee Studies Programme, Oxford University, Queen Elizabeth House, 21 St. Giles, Oxford OX1 3LA. (0865)-270722. FAX: (0865) 270729. Telex: 83147—attn QEH/RSP. E-mail: Bond @ UK.AC. Oxford. VAX. Director: Dr. Barbara Harrell-Bond.

Center for multi-disciplinary research, teaching, and training of practitioners in the field of involuntary migration. RSP provides public information; holds weekly seminars and annual international symposia to provide a forum for dialogue between academics, refugees, host, government officials, and agency workers. Publishes the *Directory of Current Research on Refugees and Other Forced Migrants*, the *Journal of Refugee Studies*, the *Refugee Participation Network*, and *Displaced Peoples and Refugees: A Resource Guide*, and other works in this field.

Refugee Voices Inc., 3041 Fourth St., NE, Washington, DC 20017-1102. (202) 832-0020. FAX: (202) 832-5616. (800) 728-0284. Director: Frank Moan, S.J.

A public education organization that, through various media, attempts to inform Americans of the plight of refugees settled in the U.S. and those in camps throughout the world.

Refugee Women in Development (RefWID), 810 First St., NE, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20002. (202) 289-1104. Executive Director: Sima Wali.

The only national organization established to address the needs and concerns of Third World refugee women who have settled in the U.S. Priorities include conducting training on the protection needs of refugee women, particularly in regard to domestic violence; developing practical program models for leadership development and coalition building; and carrying out education and advocacy with refugee and mainstream organizations, policymakers, and the general public.

Refugees International, 220 I Street, NE, Suite 240, Washington, DC 20002. (202) 547-3785. Executive Director: Lionel Rosenblatt.

Monitors refugee situations worldwide to ensure that refugees' basic needs for protection and care are met. Provides information to policymakers and the public. Advocates for fair refugee policy at home and abroad. Organizes letter writing campaigns and publishes a newsletter.

The Salvation Army World Service Office (SAWSO), 615 Slaters Lane, Third Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314. (703) 684-5500. Executive Director: Dean B. Seiler.

As a development arm of The Salvation Army, provides technical and financial assistance in support of self-help, relief, and training programs. Assistance, including aid to disaster victims, refugees, and displaced persons, is available to the 93 countries and territories in which The Salvation Army operates.

Save the Children Federation, Inc., 54 Wilton Rd., Westport, CT 06880. (203) 221-4000. President: James J. Bausch.

Founded in 1932, serves children through community development in 38 countries including the U.S. In its refugee programs, provides humanitarian assistance with an emphasis on making refugees self-sufficient and providing a base on which long-term development can take place. Agriculture, nutrition, health care, sanitation, education, and small scale enterprise are program components in Somalia, Zimbabwe, Sudan and Pakistan. Training in literacy, language, cultural orientation, employment skills, and secondary and primary education are program components in Thailand and Indonesia.

U.S. Committee for Refugees, 1025 Vermont Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20005. (202) 347-3507. FAX: (202) 347-3418. Executive Director: Wells C. Klein; Director: Roger P. Winter.

Public information and advocacy program of the American Council for Nationalities Service. Issues publications and provides information about refugees worldwide. Participates actively as refugee advocate in development of U.S. policy with respect to refugees in U.S. and abroad. Supports specialized UN agencies working to ensure refugee protection and assistance. Publishes the *World Refugee Survey and Refugee Reports*, a monthly news service on refugee issues. (See inside front cover for full description.)

U.S. Committee for UNICEF. 333 East 38th St., New York, NY 10016. (212) 686-5522. President: Lawrence E. Bruce, Jr.

Established in 1947, the oldest and largest of 32 national committees for UNICEF. The committee informs Americans about UNICEF's efforts to meet the needs of the developing world's children and their mothers in the areas of nutrition, primary health care, clean water and sanitation, education, social services, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. Raises funds for UNICEF through greeting card sales, fund-raising events, contributions, and special events.

Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights under Law—Asylum and Refugee Rights Law Project, 1400 Eye St. NW, Suite 450, Washington, DC 20005. (202) 682-5900. Director: Deborah Sanders.

Begun in 1978 by the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights under Law, provides legal assistance to newcomers, focusing on asylum and refugee issues as well as those cases where aliens suffer employment or housing discrimination because of immigration status.

World Concern International, PO Box 33000, 19303 Fremont Ave. North, Seattle, WA 98133. (206) 546-7201. Executive Director: Fred Gregory.

Provides emergency relief, but focuses primarily on long-term development to refugees and non-refugee populations in Asia, Africa and the Americas. Assistance is usually provided through indigenous agencies in the form of technical assistance, grants, and commodities.

***World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals,** 201 Rt 9W North, Congers, NY 10920. (914) 268-4135. Director of United States Ministries: Donald N. Hammond.

Overseas, provides relief and development assistance in countries of first asylum. Domestically, provided refugee resettlement services to more than 9,000 individuals in FY 91. Also provides orientation and training to sponsoring churches, community groups, families, and individuals to assist the evangelical community to meet the needs of refugees. World Relief has a national network of 27 offices throughout the U.S.

World Vision Inc., 919 W. Huntington Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016. (213) 357-7979. President: Dr. Robert A. Seiple.

Established in 1950, an international Christian child care, relief, and development agency that supports more than 6,000 projects in 94 countries worldwide. Through emergency disaster relief, child sponsorship, primary health care, agricultural development, and community leadership training projects, World Vision's work benefits approximately 17 million people, including over one million sponsored children.

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Further information about the world refugee situation may be obtained from: U.S. Committee for Refugees, 1025 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 920, Washington, DC 20005, (202) 347-3507; or 95 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016, (212) 532-5858; or from one of the following local agencies affiliated with the American Council for Nationalities Service.

AKRON
International Institute
207 East Tallmadge Avenue
Akron, OH 44310
(216) 376-5106

ALBANY
International Center of the Capital Region
8 Russell Rd.
Albany, NY 12206-1307
(518) 459-8812

BINGHAMTON
American Civic Association
131 Front Street
Binghamton, NY 13905
(607) 723-9419

BOSTON
International Institute of Boston
287 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02115
(617) 536-1081

BOWLING GREEN
Western Kentucky Refugee Mutual Assistance, Inc.
603 E. 11th Street
Bowling Green, KY 42101
(502) 781-8336

BRIDGEPORT
International Institute of Connecticut
670 Clinton Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605
(203) 336-0141

BUFFALO
International Institute of Buffalo
864 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14209
(716) 883-1900

BURLINGTON
Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05676
(802) 885-9602

CHICAGO
Travelers and Immigrants Aid of Chicago
327 South LaSalle Street
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 435-4500

CINCINNATI
Travelers Aid International
707 Race Street, Suite 300
Cincinnati, OH 45202
(513) 721-7660

CLEVELAND
The Nationalities Service Center
1836 Euclid Avenue, Suite 200
Cleveland, OH 44115
(216) 781-4560

DENVER
Khmer Assn. Refugee
Assistance Center
1757 Vine Street
Denver, CO 80206
(303) 355-8507

ERIE
International Institute of Erie, Pennsylvania
517 East 26th Street
Erie, PA 16504
(814) 452-3935

FLINT
International Institute
515 Stevens Street
Flint, MI 48502
(313) 767-0720

FRESNO
ACNS-Central Valley Resettlement Services
703 N. Fulton, Suite J
Fresno, CA 93728
(209) 264-4080

GARY
International Institute of Northwest Indiana, Inc.
4433 Broadway
Gary, IN 46409
(219) 980-4636

HONOLULU
Kalihi-Palama Immigrant Service Center
720 North King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
(808) 845-3918

HOUSTON
YMCA International Services
3515 Allen Parkway
Houston, TX 77019
(713) 527-8690

JERSEY CITY
International Institute of New Jersey
880 Bergen Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07306
(201) 653-3888

KANSAS CITY
Don Bosco Nationalities Service
531 Garfield
Kansas City, MO 64124
(816) 691-2900

LAREDO
Associacion Pro Servicios Sociales
Centro Aztlan
406 Scott Street
Laredo, TX 78040
(512) 724-6244

LAWRENCE
International Institute of Greater Lawrence, Inc.
454 Canal St.
Lawrence, MA 01840
(508) 687-0981

LINCOLN
Khmer Association
825 "M" Street, Suite 201
Lincoln, NE 68508
(402) 474-3733

LOS ANGELES
International Institute of Los Angeles
435 South Boyle Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90033
(213) 264-6210

LOWELL
International Institute of Lowell
79 High Street
Lowell, MA 01852
(508) 459-9031

MANCHESTER
International Center
102 N. Main Street
Manchester, NH 03102
(603) 668-8602

MANCHESTER R&P
ACNS-New Hampshire
34 Gilhaven Road
Manchester, NH 03104
(603) 641-6190

MIAMI
Christian Community Service Agency
3360 West Flagler Street
Miami, FL 33135
(305) 442-4202

MILWAUKEE
International Institute of Wisconsin
1110 N. Old World 3rd Street
Suite 420
Milwaukee, WI 53208
(414) 225-6220

NEW YORK CITY
Travelers Aid Services
2 Lafayette Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10007
(212) 577-7700

NEW YORK CITY R & P
Church Avenue Merchants Block Association (CAMBA)
1720 Church Avenue, 2nd Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11226
(718) 287-2600

OAKLAND
International Institute of East Bay
297 Lee Street
Oakland, CA 94610
(510) 451-2846

PHILADELPHIA
Nationalities Service Center of Philadelphia
1300 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215) 893-8400

PROVIDENCE
International Institute of Rhode Island, Inc.
421 Elmwood Avenue
Providence, RI 02907
(401) 461-5940

ST. LOUIS
International Institute of Metropolitan St. Louis
3800 Park Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63110
(314) 773-9090

ST. PAUL
International Institute of Minnesota
1694 Como Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108
(612) 647-0191

SAN FRANCISCO
International Institute of San Francisco
2209 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94109
(415) 673-1720

TOLEDO
International Institute of Greater Toledo
2040 Scottwood Avenue
Toledo, OH 43620
(419) 241-9178

TWIN FALLS
College of Southern Idaho Refugee Service Center
260 4th Avenue East
Twin Falls, ID 83301
(208) 736-2166

WASHINGTON, DC
Travelers Aid Society of Washington, DC
512 C Street NE
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 546-3120

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- International Catholic Migration Commission
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- Presbyterian Church USA, Social Justice and Peacemaking Ministry
- Ramsey Clinic
- Rav Tov, Inc.
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- World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals
- World Vision, Inc.
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